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THE RIVIERA

BY

HUGH MACMILLAN, D.D., LL.D., F.R.S.E., F.S.A.Scot.

Author of "The Highland Tay," "Holidays in High Lands," "First Forms of Vegetation," "Roman Mosaics," etc., etc.

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Third Edition

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PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

In this new edition of "The Riviera," it has been deemed advisable to restrict the range of the book to the western portion, and to omit altogether the part beyond Alassio, which appeared in the two former editions. This is the region that is most frequented by, and most familiar to, English tourists and health-seekers on this delightful shore. All the old wood-engravings have been left out, and the principal spots between Hyères and Alassio are illustrated by means of full-page photographs, which are far more effective than any wood-engravings could have been. The mistakes of the former editions have been corrected; a considerable amount of new matter has been introduced, and the information has been brought up to date. It is almost impossible to secure perfect accuracy on all points in the survey of such a wide region, which is constantly undergoing many changes, on account of its rapidly increasing attractions for those who are in search of health or pleasure. But this is not of so much consequence, as the book is concerned more with the historical and romantic associations of the western Riviera, than with modes of travel or living, which can be found fully described in the various excellent guide-books to the different localities.

HUGH MACMILLAN.

TO

SIR THOMAS HANBURY, F.L.S.,

KNIGHT COMMANDER OF THE ROYAL VICTORIAN ORDER, KNIGHT COMMANDER OF THE CROSS OF THE CROWN OF ITALY, AND OF THE ORDER OF ST. MAURICE AND ST. LAZARUS,

THESE SKETCHES OF THE RIVIERA

ARE DEDICATED;

IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE OF LOVELY MORTOLA,

BY HIS ATTACHED FRIEND,

HUGH MACMILLAN.

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INTRODUCTION.

NO region in Europe combines a greater number of charms and interests than that which is known by the names of the Western Riviera (Riviera di Ponente) and the Eastern Riviera (Riviera di Levante). That narrow strip of country from Hyères to Genoa, and from Genoa to Spezia is especially favoured by nature. It lies cradled between two of the grandest natural objects. The snow-crowned Maritime Alps and the rugged Apennines form a mighty wall of defence on the one side, and the blue Mediterranean—the poetic sea of so many crowded centuries—laves its shore on the other. The one imparts to all its scenery a back-ground of celestial purity and sublimity, and the other softens with beauty its asperities, and lends animation to its quiet bays and valleys. It has a climate of its own, which, with a few local variations, owing to special circumstances of exposure, is wonderfully equable. It partakes of the excellencies of the tropics and of the temperate zone. The Alpine range protects it from the frosts and mists of the north, and attracts the clouds which discharge their watery burdens in the shape of snow upon the higher peaks, and leave the southern sky blue and clear as a sapphire; while the low rocky hills, with their steep slopes into which the Alpine range subsides as it reaches the sea, concentrate the heat of the sun, and radiate it upon the comparatively level ground along the shore, thus abnormally raising its temperature, which, however, is never felt to be too oppressive, cooled as it is by the genial influences of the Mediterranean.

What strikes the visitor most, when passing eastward beyond the smoke of Marseilles and Toulon, is the peculiar quality of the light that shines on sea and shore. Fresh from cloudy northern skies that limit the horizon and bring the heavens like a roof close to the earth, imparting to the landscape a grey gentleness of tint and a mysterious depth of shadow, he is suddenly transported to a land where the brilliant sunshine and the translucent atmosphere give the feeling of vast aerial space, and naked reality surrounds him far and near. The light has a sparkling crystalline lustre, as if each particle of air through which it passes were

the facet of a gem. The dull red brick under its magic touch becomes almost transparent, the grey rock breaks out into opaline lustres, and the blue waters near the shore gleam like the flickering hues upon the neck of a dove. Pictures done in this light seem in our country gross exaggerations of colour; but the artist knows how impossible it is to transfer to his canvas the transparencies of light and the radiances of burning hues which are at once his joy and despair.

Another feature which strikes the eye of the stranger are the steep rocky hills, seamed by dry torrent beds and cleft by deep gorges, forming the immediate background of almost all the scenery. No tender verdure of grass or moss creeps over these hills, and they are hard and rugged to the feet, and stern and arid to the eye when one is wandering among them. But at a distance they add much to the beauty and picturesqueness of the scenery. Composed for the most part of limestone, they are weathered into a great variety of striking forms, and stained like old marble with the rusty hues of age, which light up in the level afternoon sunshine into the most glowing tints. When their sides are clothed with dark green maritime pines, the gaunt nakedness of their summits comes out by contrast into more striking relief. Nothing can be more picturesque than the numberless mediæval villages that are perched here and there upon their spurs and crests, like eagles' eyries, which long years of rain and sunshine have so assimilated to the rocks upon which they rest, that it is difficult to tell where nature's workmanship ends and man's begins. Cultivation is carried up almost to the tops of the hills, and their slopes are everywere built into terraces, faced with walls of rough stone, and planted with the vine, olive, and fig-tree. Of these terraces there are hundreds of thousands, and the toil involved in their construction is almost inconceivable. Not only are they formed at first with much labour and expense, but they must be kept in constant repair, otherwise the costly soil will be washed away by the wintry rains; and breaches are being continually made in their walls. The vine-clad terraces on the steep banks of the Rhine fill the spectator with astonishment at the amount of labour expended in their formation; but for extent and difficulty of construction, they bear no comparison to the *muricciuoli*, or olive-terraces of the Western Riviera. By means of these artificially graded walls every bit of ground, no matter how bare and steep, is tilled, and the plants grown have the most favourable conditions for their development.

The vegetation also impresses the visitor with its strange and novel aspect. The native plants differ widely from those which properly belong to this latitude; and it is only when one advances four or five degrees farther south, to the zone of Naples or Sicily, that one finds again the same flora. The vegetation of Italy, especially Lombardy, Tuscany, and the region about Rome, is that of Central Europe; and many of the forms of that vegetation may be also seen along the Riviera. But the peculiar physical conditions of the latter region have produced

a flora which is neither insular nor continental, European nor Italian. It has a special physiognomy of its own, partaking largely of a semi-tropical character. And owing to the successful introduction of trees and shrubs from Africa, Australia, Peru, and India, not in single isolated specimens here and there, but in quantities sufficient to impart a decided aspect to the scenery, the visitor may well imagine himself to be in another continent altogether.

Strabo and Diodorus describe the Riviera as in their day a land of forests and meadows with frequent clouds and rains. There were no palms, or olives, or orange-trees. The people were poor, and wine and oil had to be imported. How changed is the aspect of the country now! By the disappearance of the aboriginal forests the climate has become dry and hot and fitted for a semi-tropical vegetation. Only evergreen plants can effectually resist the universal drought, and therefore the prevailing vegetation is of that nature; but the blue sky and the brilliant sunshine prevent it from assuming a dull and lustreless appearance, and give it almost the transparency and cheerfulness of our deciduous foliage. Olive-trees clothe the slopes with their dusky masses silvering to the breeze; on the arid rocks the Pinaster and the Aleppo pine give a hint of the cold northern forests; while the tall dark spires of the cypress rising here and there in picturesque groups on the plains cast their weird moveless shadows over the grey-green foliage, and lead the eye away by a succession of vistas to the distant hills. Contrasting with the sombre hues of these trees, the orange and lemon groves clothe the hottest and most sheltered spots near the shore with their glossy yellow-green tints, and sweeten the air with the fragrance of their flowers. Forming a striking foreign feature in every landscape, the eucalyptus lifts its lofty stem and slender pendulous willow-like boughs into the air, and by the incessant quivering of its leaves in the breeze gives a delightful feeling of coolness to the sultry air. Huge agaves and opuntias, rooted in the crevices of the driest rocks, forcibly recall the grotesque vegetation of the tropics. Over all the waste places cistuses spread their grey aromatic bushes, and unfold their rose-like blossoms of white and red in quick succession of evanescent beauty; while dense thickets of myrtle, thorny smilax, and spiny broom form the undergrowth of the wooded hills. But the plant which above all others attracts the stranger's eye and fascinates his imagination is the date-palm, which flourishes all along the Riviera, and is like a vision of a new world. There is no more remarkable combination in nature than the palms of this coast with the snows of the Maritime Alps, which look down upon them without daring to harm their sturdy plumes. A picture which unites and harmonises these apparently incongruous objects under one cloudless violet sky, leaves nothing to be desired in the way of landscape beauty.

Besides the charms which the Riviera derives from all these novel features of the scenery, we must enumerate that which human art supplies. The architecture of the towns and villages is peculiarly quaint and interesting; and the picturesque

industries of the people furnish inexhaustible studies to the genre painter, continually turning into sudden poetry the grey prose of common life. Romance, too, breathes over all the land its ideal beauty. The song of the troubadour and the lay of the Provençal minstrel invest every scene with the tender or tragic associations of human passion; while, to complete the enchantment of the land, memories of the far-distant past, when the world was young—of Greek enterprise and Roman power—cling to the hoary ruins that moulder on the inland heights, or give the consecration of antiquity to the quiet shores.

One of the peculiar pleasures of a visit to the Riviera is that one is transported backwards, as it were, through many centuries of the world's history, to scenes and incidents that belong to the early ages of our race. The Riviera is the bridge between the Occident and the Orient; but it has deeper sympathies with the unchanging East. Visitors from all parts of the world yearly flock in thousands to its health-resorts; large and fashionable towns, where every modern luxury may be obtained, have risen upon the sites of wretched fishing-villages; a railway, constructed with infinite difficulty through its formidable rocks, runs along its border, carrying an extensive goods and passenger traffic, and linking it with all the commercial centres. But, notwithstanding these amazing changes, that have occurred within the lifetime of the present generation, the visitor will find close to the most fashionable resorts numerous traces of the old ways of the people; and at every step he will get new light shed upon passages of Scripture with which he had been familiar from childhood, but which he had never thoroughly understood until now. Hundreds of texts that suggested little or no meaning, as we heard them on Sundays in our early years, amid circumstances with which they had no natural affinity, there, in a land like that of their birth, become suddenly most significant, when thus illustrated. We find ourselves in this western part of the Mediterranean surrounded and touched by a continued life, which brings the experiences of kings and godly men of old into contact with the altogether different experiences of our modern civilisation. What we have idealised in our Biblical education into a kind of cloudland, has here a real existence in the matter-of-fact world. Here, more vividly than anywhere else out of Palestine, we shall realise the scenic background of sacred history, and recall the objects which gave life and colour to the visions of prophets and the songs of the Temple, and lent their charm to the greatest dramas that have ever been enacted on our earth; while a grand sanctification from Bible memories gives to every hour in this beautiful land a Sabbath significance.

THE RIVIERA.

I.

HYÈRES, FRÉJUS, AND ST. RAPHAËL.

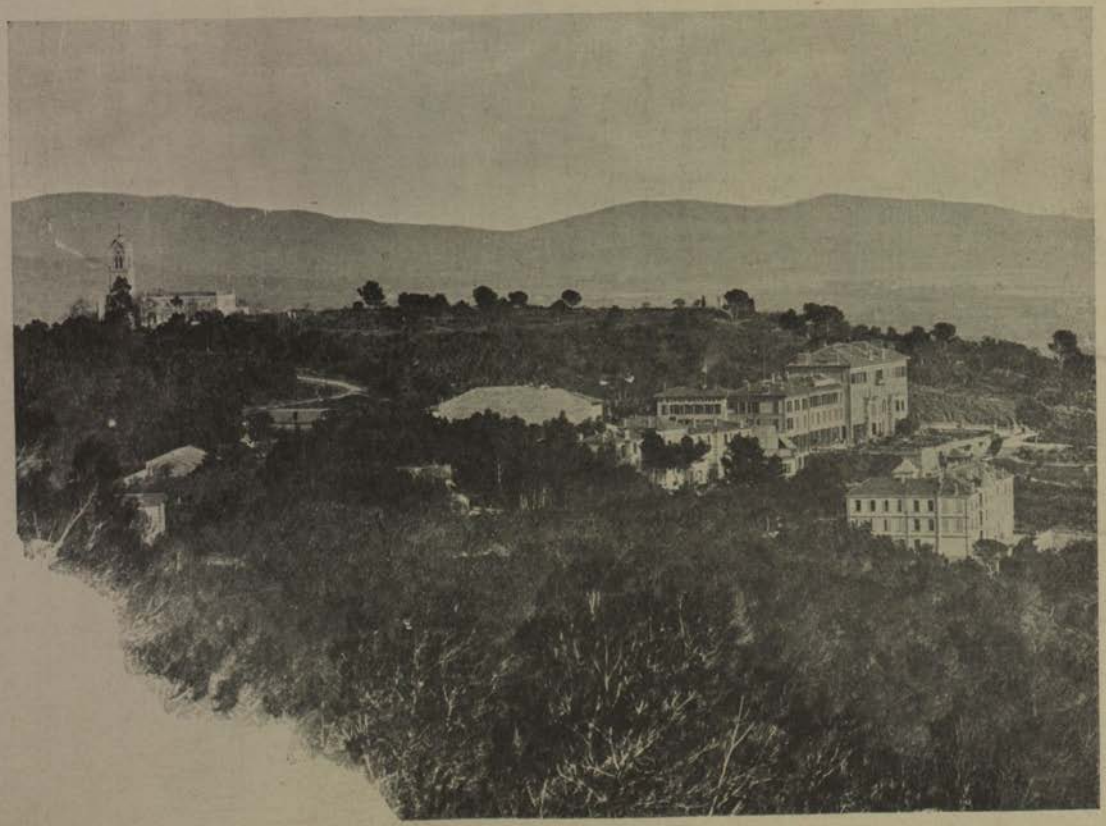
HYÈRES may be considered the vestibule of the Riviera. This favourite health resort is situated in a region which, from the peculiar richness of its pine, orange, and olive products, has received the name of the Garden of Provence. On the land side it is surrounded by the beautiful rocky group of the Maure Mountains, richly clothed with underwood, mixed with pine and cork trees; between whose ridges run up numerous sheltered valleys, where charming excursions may be made. These mountains protect the town from the keenness of the north and east winds, and so concentrate the sunshine that the place enjoys a temperature as mild as Nice. But it is a drawback that it is not sufficiently protected on the west side from the mistral, which blows from that quarter in spring; and that it is more than three miles from the sea, and consequently does not enjoy the fresh breezes and the variable life and interest which belong to coast places. By the Romans the settlement was called Aræ; and it was known in the Middle Ages by the name of Ahires. It was the port from which pilgrims in the thirteenth century were in the habit of sailing for the Holy Land.

The old town, which is not over clean, lies very picturesquely around the base and on the south-eastern flank of a steep hill, crowned by the old fortifications, and, at a height of 657 feet above the sea, by the ruins of an ancient castle, which was probably founded on the site of the Roman fortress which existed here, called Castrum Arærarum. The Château hill is formed of a geological material somewhat rare in the Riviera, whose rocks are principally limestone. It consists of mica-schist and clay-slate with quartz, the soil near the town being formed by its disintegration, and remarkably fertile if constantly watered. Hyères was formerly sur-

rounded by walls, but they have long since been removed and the space converted into boulevards planted with palms and evergreen trees. The square and lofty towers of the castle, which are probably not older than the thirteenth century, are well preserved, showing still the original crenelations. The interior of the castle is broken down and the empty space cultivated as a vineyard. From this elevated point a splendid panoramic view may be obtained of the old town, the richly cultivated alluvial plain at the foot extending to the sea, where early fruits, vegetables, and flowers are grown in great profusion for the northern markets, the long, low, but picturesque islands of Hyères, called the Iles d'Or, the sunny Oiseaux Hills, the peak of Mount Coudon, 2,305 feet high, which George Sands mentions in terms of great commendation in one of her works, and the highest summits of the Maure range.

There are two very interesting old churches in Hyères, St. Paul and St. Louis, both built in the twelfth century, though somewhat clumsily restored in modern times. The former is situated in the middle of the old town on a terrace looking to the sea, and is crowned with a plain square tower like an Italian campanile. The original building was erected in the twelfth century, but the lower part of the walls and buttresses, required to bring up the foundations to a uniform level at the east end, are the only remains of this period, with the exception of a most curious baptismal font which is much older. The eye is arrested by the remarkable arched doorway built of huge wedge-shaped stones in the Moorish style, of which several other examples occur in the town, and which would seem to point to some period when the place was in possession of the Moors. The church of St. Louis is in the low part of the town, and belonged to the Cordeliers, a name given to the Franciscans from the cords which they wore round their waists. It is built in the Byzantine style, and has a beautiful pulpit of walnutwood, as well as a row of stalls with curious canopies and confessionals set in the wall, all executed in the same material, and carved with elegant and original designs. Behind the altar is a large and striking picture representing an incident of deep local interest, namely, the landing of St. Louis with his queen and children on the shore of Hyères, on the 12th July, 1254, in order to pay a visit at the castle to Bertrand de Foz, the last of the ancient race of the Counts of Provence. In the square in front of this church, beside a fountain, is a statue of Charles of Anjou, son of Louis VIII. of France, who, by marrying the Countess Beatrice, ended the romantic dynastic rule of the Counts of Provence, and placed their extensive territories under the sway of the Angevin sovereigns of France.

In the Rue Rubaton was born, in 1663, the greatest of the pulpit orators of France, the celebrated Massillon. His father was a notary, and the business was continued in the same house from father to son from 1647 to 1834, when the family either removed or became extinct. Massillon himself was destined for the same



Photo, Giletta, Nice.

The Hotels of Costebelle, Hyères.

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professsion. He was sent at first to a school in the upper part of the town, taught by fathers of the Oratory, and afterwards was bound as an apprentice in his father's office. For drawing deeds and contracts, however, the youthful genius had no taste. He had already shown wonderful aptitude for study, and used to amuse his companions by reciting to them the sermons he had heard on great occasions. After a two years' probation his father wisely released him from the desk and allowed him to prosecute his studies for the Church. Becoming a member of the Oratorian Order, he rose rapidly in his profession. At the age of thirty-five he became the most popular preacher in Paris, and was appointed Court Preacher to Louis XIV. This distinguished position he occupied for twenty years, during which he maintained a supremacy in the pulpit, and prepared and delivered those wonderful specimens of Christian eloquence which have enjoyed in this country a wider popularity than those of any other foreign ecclesiastic. He was then elevated to the see of Clermont, and spent the remainder of his life in retirement among the mountains of Auvergne; having, strange to say, never preached a single sermon after he assumed the bishop's mitre. His Majesty Louis XIV., at the close of his engagement at Versailles, paid him the compliment of saying, "Father, I have listened in my chapel to many great preachers, and I have been very well satisfied with them; but as often as I hear you I am very ill-satisfied with myself." This compliment, however, had its edge turned by what his wealthy friend Crozat, who used to entertain him at Montmorency, said to him: "Your sermons terrify me, but your manner of living reassures me." Regarding Massillon himself, till lately very little was generally known. His words were familiar to men, but his personality was little more than an unsubstantial shadow. He was to the majority of people simply a great voice. This obscurity has been cleared, however, by the recent biography of the Abbé Blampignon, which gives with minute and loving care a faithful picture of the genial and kindly man, in his training, his work of preaching, and his episcopate. A marble pillar and bust of Massillon adorns the Place Royal. In the little Square Massillon is situated the town-hall, on the site of an old Templar church, the curious tower of which is the official residence of the chief of the police.

In the fourteenth century Hyères was a larger and more important town than Toulon. Catherine de Medici thought at one time of making it a royal residence. The newer part of the town consists of one long street, called the Rue des Palmiers, with a row of stately palm trees on each side, and flanked by luxuriant gardens and beautiful orange-groves attached to the houses. Both the palm and orange trees, owing to the genial climate and the freedom from dust and sea air, grow better here than they do in any other parts of the Riviera, and form the most attractive features in the landscape. Outside the town there are numerous, pretty villas, inhabited chiefly by the English. The most charmingly situated are those at Costebelle, two miles nearer the sea, on the slopes of the Oiseaux Hills, embosomed among pine, olive,

and cork trees, thus combining the advantages of Arcachon with those of Hyères. From the Hermitage Hill, with the church of Nôtre Dame on the top, whose square belfry is surmounted by a gilded figure, a favourite shrine of pilgrimage, filled with votive offerings, lovely views of the surrounding country may be got unobstructed by trees. This hill is formed of old red sandstone, whose rich hue may be distinguished in the soil over a large part of the plain of Hyères. On this, and most of the hills around, may be seen growing in great luxuriance the beautiful tree-heath, from whose thick woody roots the *bruyère* or briar-root pipes are made. These roots are dug up and prepared for the Paris manufacturers by the peasants of the mountain valleys, who find it a remunerative occupation, though their industry bids fair ere long to extirpate this most beautiful and interesting plant. To the south-west of Hyères, in the ravines and along the banks of the streams on the slopes of Mount Coudon, may be found the rare and lovely Syrian shrub, the *Styrax officinalis*, which is found nowhere else wild in the Riviera. It yields in favourable circumstances a resin from its bark, which is remarkably fragrant; and its drooping clusters of white orange-like flowers are exceedingly beautiful and graceful.

The neighbourhood of Hyères affords ample scope for the most delightful and varied drives and walks. All the roads and paths are free, and the visitor may ramble without hindrance through the orchards and woods, or among the lonely valleys and hills. A favourite excursion is to the summit of Mont Fenouillet, about four miles distant, by a path that leads from the castle through dense thickets of arbutus, cork oaks, and firs. From the top, a short way above the small chapel much visited by pilgrims, the view is indeed magnificent and extensive, finer than from any other coign of vantage. The archæologist will find much to interest him at the narrow neck of land on the shore called Pres-qu'ile de Giens, about three miles from Hyères, where the remains of the Gallo-Roman town of Pomponiana were discovered in 1843, while excavations were being made near the handsome Gothic Villa of St. Pierre des Horts. This naval station was founded at the end of the first century. The remains consist chiefly of a villa with baths, some vaults and foundations, and a part of a mole embedded in mud, seen at low water. In the lower part of the quay-wall are great cubes of stone, built without cement, in the Cyclopean fashion, which point to a very remote origin. The naturalist will also find in this place several rare plants and a large quantity and variety of shells: while he will be charmed with the splendid maritime and umbrella pines which cover the beach, and make the air fragrant with their balsamic odour. West from Pomponiana is the small straggling village of Carquieranne, through which the Toulon omnibus passes. It is romantically situated, and has to the west a striking peak about a thousand feet high, called Mont Negre. The railway has been extended to La Plage, where begins the Salins beach, so called from the extensive salt-works along it, the buildings of which may be seen from some distance. The ground all around is marshy, and the

Photo, Giletta, Nice.

Hyères.

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salt is made by the evaporation of the sea-water by the heat of the sun in artificial basins scooped out of these marshes.

An interesting excursion may be made to the Islands of Hyères, which lie about six miles from the shore. They were well known to the ancient Romans by the name of the Stœchades, and in the Middle Ages were called the Golden Islands, on account of their rich productiveness. There are four principal ones, the largest of which, called Porquerolles, is the westernmost, and is about four miles long and two broad. A small village of about a hundred inhabitants is situated on the slope of the hill near the landing place, with an imposing-looking château beyond it, consisting of a considerable mass of masonry surmounted by a large round tower. At the foot of the mound on which it stands there are extensive barracks and a convalescent hospital, for soldiers sent there by the French Government from Algiers on account of the superior salubrity of the climate. In this island lived a member of the noble family of Cibo during the fourteenth century, widely known by the romantic name of the "Monk of the Golden Islands." He obtained equal fame as a troubadour and as a miniature painter or illuminator.

Before going to Fréjus, which is the next most interesting place, a little divergence from the main line may well be made by a branch railway to Draguignan, if only to see one of the most remarkable pre-historic remains in the south of France. About half a mile from the town, by the side of the road to Castellane, is a very large dolmen, consisting of one huge flat limestone slab, two feet and a-half thick, eighteen feet long and twelve feet wide, supported at a height of seven feet from the ground by four rough upright stones. Around this most interesting Celtic monument are growing a juniper-tree more than twenty feet high and several hundred years old, a splendid specimen of *Celtis Australis*, called by the local name of *Micoculier*, and a fine oak, as if commemorating the dark groves which used to overshadow such religious sanctuaries. France may be said to be the native country of the dolmens. They are not only more numerous there than in any other country, but they are also larger and finer. They seem to have been constructed by the lineal descendants of the cave men, whose remains have been detected in such quantities in the south of France. The Draguignan dolmen was either a sepulchral monument, connected also with religious worship—for the tomb and the church in those early days were identical—or else the memorial of some great battle.

The railway, which passes inland all the way from Toulon, touches the coast at Fréjus. Half-way is the station of Le Luc, the Forum Voconii of the Romans, where a Roman sculpture of a boar-hunt has been preserved as a relic of the olden times. At this place, in the very middle of the "Garden of Provence," it is worth while halting for the purpose of visiting the ruins of a most interesting Cistercian abbey of the twelfth century, about six miles to the northward, near the village of Thoronet. The architecture of this abbey, externally and internally, is of the very

plainest description, in accordance with the strict rules of St. Bernard; in this respect presenting a remarkable contrast to the ornate structures of a later period.

A short distance west of Fréjus is the small station of Le Muy, where, on the left hand, may be seen an old tower, from which Charles V. was fired at on his retreat from his disastrous expedition into Provence. The fatal shot intended for him was received by the Spanish poet, Garcilaso de la Vega, who followed in his suite, and was mistaken for his master on account of his more brilliant dress.

The visitor will find in Fréjus numberless objects to attract him. The Esterel range begins here, extending northwards for about thirteen miles, and eastwards about ten, forming one of the most beautiful and picturesque groups of mountains in the south of Europe. The range consists of bare fantastic cliffs of porphyry, rising abruptly in some instances, as in Mount Vinaigre, to a height of 2,000 feet from the midst of dense pine woods, with whose sombre green their warm reddish hues form a pleasing contrast. Nothing can be more charming than the situation of Fréjus, with the graceful outlines and changing hues of the Esterels forming its eastern horizon, and bright glimpses of the sea constantly shining through its olive and pine woods. Over all the place, too, broods the dreamy atmosphere of the past. One seems to live there in an old forgotten world, as remote as possible from this busy exciting age. The ghost of departed Rome still haunts the spot, and imparts the wondrous magic of its history to every feature of the landscape and to every quaint ruin around. No other part of Provence retains so many traces of Roman occupation; and by means of the surviving relics it would not be difficult to construct in imagination a picture of the town as it was in the days of Julius Cæsar, its founder, after whom it was named Forum Julii. During the intervening ages, however, the débris brought down by the torrent of the Argens has silted up the ancient capacious harbour, in which the famous fleet of three hundred ships, captured by Augustus at Actium, was placed; the railway now passes over its site, and the modern town of Fréjus is nearly a mile from the shore.

In the streets the visitor comes upon many lintels and gateways that belonged to the Roman time, particularly in the Rue Eveché, where there are well-executed caryatides supporting the sculptured door-way of a mediæval house. The course of the old Roman walls and fortifications may be traced by considerable fragments here and there, and by the remains of gateways, such as the Porte d'Italie, composed of large blocks of stone, and the Golden Gate, supposed to have been the gate between the port and the town, which has alternate layers of stone and brick. But the grandest relics are those of the amphitheatre, which is 375 feet long and 273 feet wide, capable of holding 9,000 spectators, and still retaining the arches which sustained the seats and stair-cases, etc., and the aqueduct, which conveyed the water of

the Siagnote from the mountains, a distance of twenty-four miles. For a large part of the way the aqueduct passed underground, and on emerging near the town it was carried for about half a mile over a series of eighty-seven lofty arches, many of which are still perfect, and, stained by time and draped with moss and wild flowers, afford most picturesque subjects for the artist's pencil. To the English visitor Fréjus is especially interesting as the birthplace of Julius Agricola, the conqueror and governor of Britain. It is the residence of the Bishop of Fréjus and Toulon. The cathedral is a Romanesque edifice of the twelfth century, the east end of which is surmounted by a tower of defence with an embattled parapet at the top. It is one of the numerous examples of fortified churches to be found along this coast, owing to its insecure condition during the Middle Ages. The Church and the Bishop's Palace, built of stones from the Roman ruins, considerable remains of which still exist, were at one time enclosed by a strong wall for the purpose of protection. Attached to the Cathedral is a beautiful octagonal Baptistery, with a granite column crowned with a white marble Corinthian capital in each of its eight angles. The design of this ancient building was adopted from the Roman circular temples; and the pillars are in all likelihood of Roman origin; while the immense stones above the pillars on which the arches of the roof rest, remind one irresistibly of the entablature which was a necessary part of a classic structure. The wooden doors of the cathedral are beautifully carved with Scripture subjects; and from the roof an ancient lamp of brass is suspended. Apart from these objects of interest, however, the whole aspect of the town is melancholy in the extreme.

Two miles beyond Fréjus the railway reaches the shore at the station of St. Raphaël, which is fast developing into a fashionable watering-place, and thus losing much of its quaint old charm. Its little port is protected from the southerly sea by a jetty eighty yards long. Behind the town there is a grand horizon of mountains, the lowest slopes wooded richly with pines and brushwood, and the highest ranges of the lesser chains of the Alps bold and hoary. Among the most prominent features in the neighbourhood may be mentioned that of Roquebrune, 1,300 feet high, which is dark in appearance and flattened at the top, sloping rapidly to the west, and descending in the east to the Fréjus plain in an irregular succession of vertical cliffs. Mount Vinaigre has a grand appearance with its two thousand feet of rock glistening red in the setting sun; and Cape Roux has also a striking effect when the afternoon light brings out its vivid colouring of green and red. St. Raphaël was the birthplace of the celebrated Abbé Sieyès, one of the chief political writers during the period of the French Revolution and the first Empire, who formed with Napoleon the first provisional Consulate, and of whom Mirabeau said that when he ceased writing and speaking "his silence was a public calamity." Alphonse Karr, the well-known author of "A Little Tour Round My Garden," resided here till his

death in November, 1890, and by his writings, helped to make the spot well known.

It was at this place that Napoleon landed on his return from Egypt in 1799, and embarked in 1814 for Elba when the tide of fortune had gone against him. It has many delightful walks in its neighbourhood, particularly along the beach to Frejus, under the shadow of splendid specimens of the stone pine, which is much less frequent and characteristic in the Riviera than it is in Central and Southern Italy, where its tall red trunk and dark green, wide-spreading, umbrella like crown is a conspicuous feature in every landscape. Views of the blue, ermine-edged waters of the Mediterranean flashing in the brilliant sunshine, and of the graceful peaks of the Esterels standing out clear and warm against the violet sky, impart a special charm to this ramble. Another walk is almost equally delightful, up the ravine through which the Garonne flows between the lower ridges of the Esterels, where their gaunt rocky ruggedness is softened by a thick underwood of heath and arbutus, and shaded by dense clumps of maritime pines. Near here occurs the rare garlic called Allium Sicilium, this being one of the very few places out of Sicily where it can be seen.

From St. Raphaël may be visited the interesting old town of St. Tropez by a steamer which leaves in the morning on certain days. This town occupies the site of the ancient Heraclea Caccabaria, an important naval station in Roman times. It was occupied by the Moors in the ninth century, and from them the mountain range behind received the name of Les Maures. At the present day it has a considerable traffic in fish, being renowned for its soles and sea-urchins; and its fine harbour in the well-protected Gulf of Grimaud always shelters a large number of coasting vessels. From St. Tropez a charming path leads round the upper end of the gulf to the village of Grimaud, situated on a hill surmounted by the grey ruins of a most commanding castle, built in the fourteenth century for the Grimaldi, to whom the whole of this region then belonged. The ancient chapel has the same round arched doorway, with deep Moorish voussoirs, like those of Hyères. On the way to Le Luc the diligence passes from this place over hills covered with splendid old forests of chestnut and oak. At the highest point is the small village of La Garde Freinet, which is most picturesquely situated with a background of steep rocks, romantic valleys and gloomy pine-woods, resembling the scenery of some Scottish glen. On the top of a precipice to the north of the village there are some ruins of the ancient fortress of the Grand Fraxinet, which was for a hundred years the Moorish capital or stronghold, from which, the bay of Grimaud being their harbour, the pirates descended to pillage the surrounding country.

Between St. Raphaël and the next station of Agay, amid very wild and rocky scenery, are the ancient quarries of grey porphyry—found only in this place—where the Romans obtained the stone with which they built the principal structures

of Fréjus, and some of the finest columns which adorned the temples and forums of Rome. Agay, known to the ancient Greeks as Agathopolis, and to the Romans as Portus Agatonis, is a wonderfully lovely spot, with the waves breaking in transparent blue and glistening white on its dark red rocks, and its little streamlets murmuring and glancing through its myrtle-covered valleys. It is strange to contrast the fiery forces to which these crystalline hills of the Esterels owe all their fantastic ruggedness, with the quiet loveliness of flowery dells and shady woods which they hide in their bosoms—retreats where the tables of the money-changers of the great human world outside are overthrown, and all the cares connected with them are forgotten, and the only gold is that of the lily and the coronilla. The people, however, it must be candidly confessed, have a hard lot; for, though the mountains are rich in mineral and vegetable resources, there seems to be no one with sufficient energy or capital to develop and make them available, and therefore the peasantry find little work to do. This condition of things has been chronic for centuries, ever since the Countess of Provence, the Queen of Naples whom Petrarch has immortalised, gave them leave to settle in this region; and in the eighteenth century it pressed so severely that many of the people took to the woods and became robbers and bandits for a livelihood, so that a law had to be passed that the ground on either side of the highway should be kept clear of trees and bushes, lest the traveller should be unexpectedly attacked by an ambush.

From a picturesque point of view, indeed, it is not a matter of regret that the miner has not found his way to this haunted region. The quarryman, though he wounds the fair face of nature, does not permanently injure or defile her, and the wounds, which often cause a new picturesqueness, are easily healed by her own hand. But were the iron mine at Agay to be worked, and the sulphate of lead in the valley of Argentière to be extracted in larger quantities than the present needs of the pottery makers of Vallauris require; or, worse still, were the prejudice against the dirty and smoky coal and petroleum found at Auriosque, Réyran, and Bozon to be overcome, and these materials should constitute to a large extent the fuel of the country—then farewell to the crowns of magnificent pines which at present adorn the crests of the hills, and to the perennial carpets of heath, cistus, and arbutus which clothe the slopes. The fairy Estrella, the *nom de plume* of Diana, the shy huntress, to whom in Roman times this district was consecrated, would be expelled from the haunts which she has frequented so long, and with her all the charms of tree and flower, rock and stream which her undisturbed presence implies. Great, however, as are the beauties of this region, it is not, it must be confessed, an easy matter for the visitor to explore them. What constitutes its attractions from a scenic point of view constitutes its difficulties to the pedestrian. It is a very tangled and pathless wild, where considerable detours have to be made and much fatigue has to be undergone in order to reach spots that seem only a few miles apart;

while there are no places of refreshment, and the people are rough in their habits, and sometimes rude to strangers. But the charms of the excursions will more than repay the disadvantages. One of the most interesting of these is a visit to the holy cave of St. Honorat, where the saint lived a hermit's live for several years. It is about six miles distant up among the mountains, and a good walker can easily accomplish it. On the way he will get a complete idea of the magnificent mountain scenery to the east and west, and come upon a Roman milestone with an inscription, from which archæologists have inferred that the old Via Aurelia passed in this direction.

Photo, Giletta, Nice.

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Boulevard de la Croisette, Cannes.

II.

CANNES AND GRASSE.

WE are accustomed to think of Cannes as very modern, a recent creation of the English, but it is in reality a place of great antiquity. Its early history is very obscure. Originally it is supposed to have been a Ligurian settlement called Ægitna, where the Roman consul, Quintus Opimius, fought a triumphant battle with the native tribes in the middle of the second century. It was ruled for a time by the governors of Marseilles, who were then allies of the Romans, from whom it received the name of Castrum Massiliorum, and was subsequently twice destroyed by the Saracens in the eighth and tenth centuries. Repeopled by a colony from Genoa, one of the Counts of Provence called it Castrum Francum, or Château Franc, on account of the freedom from taxation which he conferred upon it. Its modern name of Cannes was derived from the long reeds or "cannes" which formerly grew in immense abundance in the marshy grounds around, and imparted a peculiar appearance to the landscape. Numerous towns in Italy, such as Canneto and Canossa, obtained their names from the same cause; and Cana in Galilee is a similar example. .

At first Cannes was perched, after the manner of most ancient Provençal towns and villages, on the top of an isolated rock called Mont Chevalier, from the ecclesiastical suzerain who governed the town in the name of the superiors, the abbots of Lérins. It had little to show besides a few narrow steep streets, quaint gables, old arches and doorways crowding round the ancient castle, with a church on the highest point dedicated in 1603 to Notre Dame d'Espérance. The square tower of the castle—which is popularly termed Saracenic, but was actually built partly on Roman substructures in the eleventh century by one of the Abbots of Lérins—was admirably adapted as a place of safety in troublous times, having its door high up, accessible only by a ladder. A curious arch in this ancient part of the town is called Lou Posterlo, or Chemin de Traverse, and had a sentinel always stationed there. A church of the same date was built in connection with the castle called the

church of St. Anne, exhibiting the same extremely simple style of Cistercian architecture which may be seen at Thoronet. The hoary tower of the present parish church of Notre Dame d'Espérance, raised on the substructure of one of the original towers of the castle, contains the clock of the town, and is one of the most conspicuous features in all the views of Cannes. Owing to its prominent position it afforded an excellent landmark to sailors, who therefore cherished a special reverence for it and adorned it with their *ex voto* offerings.

After a time the patron lady of Cannes—according to the legend—appeared one day to a peasant girl watching her flocks in the meadows by the sea, and sent her to inform the inhabitants of the village on the rock that they might leave the security of their elevated fortress and build their houses on the plain round about, and she would protect them from their enemies. This supernatural permission was speedily taken advantage of by the cramped inhabitants, and the margin of the small harbour and the eastern slope of the hill were by-and-by covered with their squalid houses; this quarter of the town receiving the name of Sucquet, the main street forming part of the famous Corniche Road extending from Marseilles to Genoa along the coast. When Napoleon landed in its vicinity after his escape from Elba it was the same obscure fishing village among the reeds which Smollett and De Saussure described it. In 1831, however, the beauty of the neighbourhood and the fineness of the climate attracted the attention of Lord Brougham, who was prevented from crossing the Italian frontier to Nice by the Sardinian authorities on account of the cholera. Thus detained he determined to settle at Cannes, bought a piece of ground and built upon it a house, which he called the Villa Louise Eleonore, in memory of his only child. To this spot he used to come every winter thereafter; and there he spent his last days, dying in the summer of 1868. His choice made the place famous; his example brought many Scotch and English people to the locality; and Cannes is now a large and important town of more than 20,000 inhabitants, and the most fashionable winter resort in the south of Europe. A beautiful promenade has been formed along the beach, and the neighbourhood is thickly studded with magnificent villas embosomed in the richest and most varied exotic vegetation. Cannes possesses a marked character of its own. Its locality is remarkably well chosen, the numerous low hills and rising grounds forming admirable sites for houses and gardens; and almost every view has for its western background the range of the Esterels, whose marvellous beauty of form and colour affords a continual feast to the eye. To the natural picturesque features of the spot are added the charms of rich and abundant foliage, beautiful semi-tropical vegetation, and brightly-coloured eastern-looking houses, all seen under a brilliant blue sky and bathed in sunshine that brings out every hue and form with the utmost distinctness.

One disadvantage about Cannes is the long stretches of white dusty roads

Photo, Giletta, Nice.

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View from Mont Chevalier, Cannes.

between walls which have to be traversed before getting into the wilds of nature. The walks and drives, however, are very numerous and varied. About two miles to the eastward is a low range of hills covered with pine-trees, the shoulder of which for some occult reason has received the name of Californie. There is a steep ascent to it, and on the slope are built several large hotels and villas. All the way up the views increase in extent and beauty, and at the top the horizon is indeed magnificent, bounded on the west by the Esterel Mountains, on the east by the long promontory of Antibes, on the south by the wide Mediterranean with the picturesque Lérin Islands, the romantic château and old and new town of Cannes forming the foreground, and on the north by long billowy ranges of hills, hoary alike with their bare rocks and their covering of olive-woods, rising up behind one another and terminating at last in the glorious peaks of the snowy Alps. At the Valetta Californie is the famous garden of Camille Dognin, which rivals in some respect the better-known gardens of Sir Thomas Hanbury and Dr. Bennet at Mentone. They are laid out on the summit of the hill, and besides their own intrinsic charms of the rarest and most beautiful trees and flowers, they have the most exquisite glimpses and vistas of sea and shore and mountain imaginable. From Californie the hill slopes steeply down and runs far out to sea, forming the picturesque promontory of La Croisette, near the end of which is a large orange garden, which is known by the imposing name of "Des Hespérides." The oranges are grown for sale, and on account of the classical grandeur of the name are dearer there than elsewhere.

Notwithstanding its recent origin, the modern town of Cannes has gathered around it so many memories of the illustrious dead, that the beauty of the place by this pathos of human association, like the bloom on the fruit, has been made perfect. At the Villa Montflueri the great French statesman, Alexis de Tocqueville, and his wife died within a few days of each other. At the Pension Mauvarre Auerbach, the favourite novelist of Germany, ended his days. Prosper Mérimée, Louis Blanc, J. B. Dumas, and the great metaphysician, Victor Cousin, all departed this life in this lovely retreat. The late Duke of Albany, as all the world knows, died very suddenly on the 2nd of April, 1884, in the Villa Nevada. In the beautiful public cemetery lie the remains of Lord Brougham, with a huge grey granite cross marking the spot; those of Sir John McNeil of Colonsay, distinguished by a tall and graceful marble monument; and those of the genial and accomplished author of the "Tales of the West Highlands," John Campbell of Islay, who more nearly, perhaps, than any one else in modern times realised the ideal of a Highland chief.

A favourite excursion is up a sheltered valley to the quaint old village of Le Cannet, about two and a-half miles north-east from the centre of the town. Situated upon rising ground and at a considerable distance from the sea, it is preferred

by some invalids to Cannes. Before the advent of Lord Brougham, and the wonderful transformation of the region in consequence, Cannes formed part of the commune of Le Cannet; and though Cannes has now a separate jurisdiction, the little village is very jealous of its old dignity, and insists upon the definite article being always prefixed to its name. Its streets are paved with round slippery boulders, are exceedingly steep and narrow, and give at every opening wonderful peeps of the valley beneath, with its groves of luxuriant olive and orange trees. Almost every old gable and arch here, with the picturesque inhabitants, would make a study for an artist. One bit especially, which includes a venerable house said to be Saracenic, with a mythical story of a siege connected with it, forms a perfect picture. Near the hotel, in the Villa Sardou, the celebrated tragedienne, Rachel, died in July, 1858. Matthew Arnold has made this event the subject of a beautiful poem:—

"Unto a lovely villa in a dell
Above the fragrant, warm Provençal shore,
The dying Rachel in a chair they bore,
Up the steep pine-plumed paths of the Esterelle,
And laid her in a stately room, where fell
The shadow of a marble Muse of yore—
The rose crown'd queen of legendary lore,
Polymnia—full in her death—'Twas well.'
The fret and misery of our northern towns,
In this her life's last day, our poor, our pain,
Our jangle of poor wits, our climate's frowns,
Do for this radiant Greek-soul'd artist cease;
Sole object of her dying eyes remain
The beauty and the glorious art of Greece."

The most interesting antiquities of Le Cannet are a machicolated tower called the Maison du Brigand, and the quaint old church of Notre Dame des Anges. At the foot of the hill there is a charming ruin called the Chapelle de St. Claude, with several fine cypresses rising above it, and near at hand an old aqueduct, a little bridge, and a dark and dirty olive-mill, all constituting very effective elements in a picturesque landscape.

To the west of Cannes there are numerous walks and excursions. The gardens and the celebrated château of the Duke of Vallombrosa, which are the oldest about Cannes, and were laid out originally by Mr. Woolfield, are well worthy of a visit on account of the magnificent trees, the luxuriant tropical vegetation, and the fountains and grottoes. The grand deciduous magnolia, with its large globular flowers, grows there and assumes its most perfect loveliness. Behind the château to the northward, on a rocky height about five hundred feet above the sea, is the iron cross of the Croix des Gardes. The road that leads to it is supposed to have formed part of the old Aurelian Way, and crosses the ravine of the river by a venerable bridge decked with ivy, said to be of Roman origin. More interesting still are the Hermi-

Photo, Giletta, Nice.

Palace of the Prince, Monaco.

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tage and the Chapel of St. Cassien, about three miles west of Cannes. The isolated eminence on which they stand, covered with splendid cypress-trees and umbrella pines, the one seeming to retain something of the darkness of the night in its shadows, and the other something of the storm in its sighs, has a very peculiar artificial look about it. It has had a *religio loci* and a sacred veneration connected with it from a remote antiquity. It is supposed that in the days of the Romans the eminence bore the name of *Ara Luci* (the Altar of the Sacred Grove), and was crowned by a temple of Venus, which lasted until an abbé of the monastery of Lérins destroyed it in the seventh century, and built upon its site with its materials a church dedicated to St. Stephen. In all probability, however, the spot has an older history still, and was one of the high places of Baal or Phœnician worship; its dedication to Venus being only a survival, so to speak, of the purpose of its original consecration. Whether its name of St. Cassien is derived from the celebrated theologian who defended St. Chrysostom against Theophilus of Alexandria, and who founded a monastery at Marseilles, where he died in the early part of the fifth century; or whether the name be, as others conjecture, only a corruption of the three last words of the sentence in which the five monks who lived on the sacred mount demanded charity—"La Carita per cinq que sian"—it is difficult to say. But the former derivation seems to be that which is generally received, judging from the fact that St. Cassien is the patron saint of Cannes, and that a grand annual fête is held in his honour at the chapel on the 23rd of July, observed much in the same way as the Pardons in Brittany. St. Cassien was a man well worthy of being so commemorated. He was one of the most remarkable personages of his age, and formed the link between the Christianity of the East and of the West. He combined in himself the contemplative and the active life, the monk and the pastor. His influence on the great monastic system of mediæval Europe was supreme; and his works, containing the most minute directions regarding outward conduct and inward devotion, derived from his own experience among the hermits of Palestine and the Riviera, have always retained a high position among the codes of monastic life. The present hermitage of St. Cassien with its charming open arcaded porch belongs to a late Renaissance style of architecture. Surrounded by ancient cypresses and pines it is very pleasant in winter and early spring to rest beneath their solemn shade, and to feel under one's feet the familiar crisp brown carpet of oak-leaves, giving forth the rustling sound and the familiar woodland smell, which recall to every Englishman the tender associations of his native woods. It seems as if these magnificent trees were doing their best to perpetuate the memory of the dark old groves that once marked the spot in pre-historic and Roman times, in whose gloomy recesses many a mysterious rite of pagan religion had been performed. Napoleon, however, it is said, cut down the finest specimens of the oaks in order to make carriages for his artillery.

Another interesting excursion still farther westward is that to the desolate looking village of Napoule, which gives its name to the bay on which Cannes is situated. Beside it are the ruins of an old castle, picturesquely built on a rocky piece of ground close to the sea. Two of the original square towers are in good preservation, but a modern mansion occupies the principal part of the old site. Napoule in ancient times was a Roman port having a depôt for grain connected with it. La Napoule in ancient times was called Avinionetum, or Little Avignon. Some homesick sailor may have perceived a resemblance between the neighbouring mount of St. Cassien with its temple of Venus and the stream flowing past it, and the hill of the Promenade des Doms at Avignon, also crowned with a temple of Venus, and the river Rhone flowing at its foot, and so given to the little Provençal village the name of the great French town; Avignon being simply a corruption of the Ave ionæa which the sailors sang as they passed by the temple of their divinity. At a short distance from Napoule there is a curious conical hill, on the top of which there is a little round chapel dedicated to St. Peter, and now called San Peyré. It was formerly the site of a temple of Mercury, which survived to the time of the Counts of Provence, when it was supplanted by the Christian building. But the principal attraction of La Napoule is its charming situation at the foot of the Esterel mountains, whose fantastic peaks and porphyritic rocks, assuming the appearance of old ruined castles, and romantic woods of pine and cork trees, form a never-ending source of enjoyment; the Mediterranean Sea running in and out amongst their promontories and projections in the loveliest little bays imaginable. The smell of the pines and the odour of the tall heather-bushes, which here grow in great profusion, especially after a shower of rain, as well as the forms and colours of the mountains, remind one of Scotland glorified with a southern climate.

The most popular of all the excursions around Cannes is that by boat or steamer to the islands of St. Marguerite and St. Honorat, which the peasants call "the rosettes of the sea." The fortress founded by Richelieu and repaired by Vauban in the former island, with its whitewashed walls and red-tiled roofs, built on steep cliffs on the north side facing the Croissette point, is historically interesting as the place where the Man in the Iron Mask was imprisoned in 1687. He was transferred to this place from the grand old castle that crowns the highest point of the sloping hill on which the old town of Pinerolo is built, where he was kept in captivity for seven years. The career of this man is one of the greatest historical mysteries, upon which all the investigations that have since taken place have shed no satisfactory light. He was obliged to wear always a mask of black velvet, constructed by springs in such a manner that he never required to take it off, even while eating. He was carefully guarded by the same keeper; and though treated with the greatest consideration, no one was allowed access to him, nor was he permitted to hold intercourse with any one. Among the various wild conjectures hazarded regarding the real name of the

Man with the Iron Mask, the theory long most popular was that he was the twin brother of Louis XIV. His birth was concealed in consequence of the superstition of his father, who had been told that twin dauphins would be fatal to France. He was brought up in obscurity; and when in his nineteenth year his identity was discovered accidentally, from his strong likeness to his brother, the reigning monarch, he was arrested and sent to Pinerolo, and subsequently to St. Marguerite and the Bastile, in which last place he died in 1703. Modern criticism, however, has completely destroyed the credibility of this theory, and substituted for the romantic tragedy an explanation as uncomfortably good and commonplace as that which is usually given of so-called ghost stories. The cell in which the "Masque de Fer" spent the fourteen long years of his confinement in the fortress of St. Marguerite is still shown. It is surrounded by walls of great thickness, is closed by double doors covered with iron nails, and has three rows of gratings to protect its little window. In the chapel may also be seen a curious old gilded chair, on which the prisoner sat when he attended worship there.

Another notable prisoner—Marshal Bazaine—was sent to this fortress after what the French called his betrayal of Metz during the Franco-Prussian war. His imprisonment, however, was of a very different nature from that of the Man with the Iron Mask. His family were permitted to accompany him to the island, and though he was nominally confined to the fortress, he enjoyed a great deal of freedom, and was allowed to take exercise unguarded along the terrace-walk in the evenings. It is said that his old comrade, MacMahon, sent him to this place to be out of the way of the court-martial which the indignant French people demanded, and which, if it had been granted, would inevitably have condemned him to death. And he was not sorry when Marshal Bazaine soon afterwards escaped from the fortress by scaling the rocks by means of a rope-ladder which his wife had provided, and sailed away in a boat to the coast of Spain. The fortress is still used for Arab criminals, who are sent there from Algeria. Their dignified attitudes, dark, wild faces, and Oriental dresses, make up a picturesque and interesting sight. Accustomed to the free life of the desert, their confinement in this fortress must be peculiarly irksome to them.

The island of St. Marguerite is covered almost entirely with a forest of splendid pines, through which the vivid sunshine comes filtered of glare and heat, falling in soft gleams on the ground, and filling all the air with a delicious balsamic fragrance. Nothing can be more charming than the glimpses of the brilliant blue sea that laves the shore, of the serene cloudless sky overhead, of the rugged Esterel mountains to the west, whose aspects of light and shade and colour are ever varying, of Cannes bathed in sunshine lying in a white semicircle around the bay and climbing up the hills behind, with the smoky haze of the olive-trees subduing the glowing hues, and of the pure snowy peaks of the Maritime Alps dominating all the vast landscape in

the distant northern background, which the visitor obtains between the brown-pillared stems and the rich green foliage of the pines. And yet, notwithstanding these attractions, the proprietors of the island had actually gone the length some years ago of negotiating to sell it for the purpose of building hotels and lodging-houses on it; and there is a melancholy interest in remembering that the last public act which the late lamented Duke of Albany performed was to sign a petition protesting against the sale.

The Island of St. Marguerite was originally called Lero, and St. Honorat Lerina, and the two islands are still known as the Iles des Lérins. Pliny mentions that in his time there was on the smaller island the ruins of an old town called Vergoanum; but its decay was probably hastened by the want of fresh water, and the island relapsed into a desert solitude. It is said that it received the name which it now bears from St. Margaret, the sister of St. Honorat, who left her northern home and, with the most devoted affection, followed her brother to this coast. When, instigated by her brother's example, she embraced Christianity, she exchanged at her baptism her pagan name for that of St. Margaret, the fair saint of Antioch who vanquished the fiery dragon. One of the rules of her brother's monastery was that no woman should be allowed to land upon the island—a rule which is still enforced, to the extent at least of forbidding women to enter the monastery. In consequence of this rule Margaret could not take up her abode with her brother, and was therefore banished to the neighbouring island, which now bears her name. There is a beautiful tradition which says that the deserted sister wrung from her brother, who wished to isolate himself completely from the world and all its affections, the promise that he would come to see her when the almond-trees on the island should blossom. The interval of waiting was so insupportably long to the lonely Margaret, that she importuned the saints to hasten the flowering season. In answer to her prayers and tears the almond-trees blossomed miraculously once a month: and sending over to the monastery a branch of flowering almond, her brother dutifully obeyed the tender summons, and the hearts of the two were made glad, for he acknowledged at last that heaven had interfered to vindicate the holiness of human love, and to exalt it above all ascetic rules of mechanical holiness. As one instance among many others of the remarkable resemblance between the history of St. Honorat and the history of Iona, it may be mentioned that in the Sound of Iona, nearly east of the Cathedral, but so near the opposite shore of Mull as to seem from Iona to form part of it, there is a small island called Eilean Nan Ban, or the "Island of the Women." It received this name from the tradition that St. Columba suffered no woman to stay in Iona, but compelled all the wives, daughters and sisters of the monks to live in this little neighbouring isle, where traces of a nunnery may yet be distinguished. The monks were allowed on certain occasions to visit this island, and consort with their relatives. Thus St. Marguerite was to St. Honorat what Eilean Nan Ban was to Iona.

From an archæological point of view St. Honorat, which is almost half a mile distant, is far more interesting than St. Marguerite. It is a perfect treasure-house of ecclesiastical antiquity. Along the pleasant road, shaded by a belt of old umbrella pines which leads round the island, are the remains of five chapels, dating from the seventh century, or even earlier. The original number was seven, but of the other two few traces now remain. They bear some resemblance to the still ruder chapels built about the same time in Ireland and in the western islands of Scotland by the saints or coarbs of St. Columba. The best preserved of the group is the Chapelle de la Sainte Trinité, at the eastern end of the island. It is a very remarkable structure and is undoubtedly one of the oldest buildings on all these shores. It is not more than twelve yards long and about three wide, and is placed from east to west. It is a low building with a doorway composed of enormous blocks of stone, reminding one of the rude structure of a cromlech. The corner stones are almost equally massive, and were in all probability derived from an older Roman building that occupied the spot, or perhaps, from a still older shrine of primitive worship. Above the lintel is a single rude aperture by which the dark interior is lighted. The arches of the nave and of the apsidal chapels are of the rudest and most primitive description, and were evidently among the first attempts to imitate the early Christian architecture of the East. At the western extremity of the island, within an old fort, is the chapel of St. Sauveur, which looks on the outside, with its tiled roof and white-washed walls, like a peasant's cottage. Inside it is a regular octagon with a dome-shaped roof, six of the sides being occupied by arched niches, the seventh being formed into an apse containing a rude stone altar with three holes in it, supported on one foot. On the remaining side is the rough ruined doorway, with a small round window over it, through which the light enters into the interior. Having been often used as a fold for goats and a cooking-place for herdsmen, the walls are blackened with smoke, and the place is kept in a disgraceful state. It bears a close resemblance to the Chapel of St. Sauveur, at Grasse; and it is believed to have been originally a baptistery connected with the monastery, and the first Christian building erected on the island. Besides these most interesting old buildings, there are the Chapel of St. Justine, now a stable, the ruins of the Chapel of St. Cyprian, and the restored Chapel of St. Porcaire, where it is said that the saint was buried.

These seven ancient chapels of St. Honorat were, like the seven sister churches in the county of Wicklow, Ireland, famous all over the south of Europe as shrines of pilgrimage. In the Middle Ages pilgrims from all parts of France and Germany flocked to them, and he who visited them seven years in succession received from the prior of the monastery a palm-branch and absolution for all his sins. There is a tradition of a devout Provençal swineherd who had made a pilgrimage to the seven churches no less than six times, but was prevented on the last occasion by his

churlish master from completing the mystic number of visits. Worn out with sorrow on account of his disappointment, he fell sound asleep one day while tending his herd of swine on the edge of an oak-wood among the mountains, and dreamt that he had actually set his foot for the seventh time on the holy island, and that in consequence the abbot had given to him the coveted palm-branch as the reward of his devotion. Awaking from his sleep, he was about to renew his lamentation on account of the aggravated mockery of the vision, when he found, to his great wonder and joy, a palm-branch lying by his side, brought by an angel to comfort him for his sore disappointment. There is also a tradition that St. Virgile, one of the abbots of the monastery, was in the habit of going the round of the seven chapels every night, so excessive was his devotion; and it is said that his ghost still haunts the sacred precincts, and may be seen by the belated visitor. These chapels are undoubtedly relics of the earlier cœnobitic establishment of the time of St. Honorat.

But the most remarkable of all the ancient buildings on the island is the keep or castle erected on a promontory which juts out into the sea at the south side. It presents a curious combination of religious and military architecture, having been fortified in the manner of the great Eastern monasteries, with a strong donjon-tower surrounded by a loopholed wall, in order to protect the monks from the attacks of the Saracens. Outside it looks exactly like a castle or fortress, bearing a close resemblance in style of architecture to some of the old castles in Britain; but the interior arrangements are purely those of a monastery. In the centre of the tower is the oblong cloister in three stories, of which two remain entire. The gallery of the first is supported by pillars of marble and granite, of different colours, standing round an ancient cistern, one of which has the inscription, "Constantino Augusto Div." carved upon it, which indicates it to be of Roman origin. From this gallery open the doors into the cells of the monks and the refectory. The story above is constructed in the same style, only with smaller pillars, and leads to the library and to the Chapel of the Holy Cross, where rest the remains of St. Honorat, St. Venance, his brother, and St. Capraise, his spiritual teacher—the three tutelary saints of the island. From the top of the tower, which still exhibits many traces of the works added by the Spaniards for artillery, a most magnificent view is obtained of Cannes and the far background of the snowy Alps. In the wall of the tower is shown a cannon-ball fired by the English when they took possession of the Iles des Lérins, in 1749; and near at hand there is an old palm-tree, which is said to have sprung from an older and larger one, which St. Honorat climbed when he prayed that the sea might overwhelm the island, and so destroy the serpents with which it was infested. The large chapel belonging to the castle was rebuilt in 1876, and the whole arrangement of the interior altered; the altar, which originally faced the east, being placed where the door once opened. At the present door of entrance there is an old Roman pillar

Photo, Giletta, Nice.

Château St. Honorat, Cannes.

To face p. 20.

of red marble; and there are other interesting remains, particularly in the transept and cloister of the primitive edifice, which probably date from the eighth or even the seventh century. The whole appearance of this fortified monastery is so ancient-looking with its rich golden coloured interior, harmonising so perfectly with the dark green of the pine-trees around, and the blue sky and sea, that it inspires a deep feeling of veneration.

The isle of St. Honorat has had a most eventful history, strangely out of keeping with the peace of its solitude and the beauty of its surroundings. To the student of ecclesiastical history it is one of the most impressive spots in the south of Europe. Almost invisible on the map, it at one time occupied a conspicuous position in the eyes of the world. For the moral progress of humanity, as Montalembert truly says, it formed a centre of the soul, purer and more fertile than any famous isle of the Grecian Archipelago. It was the cradle of European monasticism; for it was by St. Honorat that the monasticism of Egypt first reached the West. For more than five hundred years it was the pulse of Christian Europe. It may well be called the Iona of the south. It is a remarkable circumstance that the two little insignificant islands, one in the far north in the Atlantic and the other in the far south in the Mediterranean, should have formed the centres that drew to them all the intellectual and spiritual forces which conserved Christendom during the darkest and most stormy periods. The correspondence between the two islands in their geographical position and in their ecclesiastical history is singularly close. Their annals run on parallel lines. St. Honorat was a man of the same stamp as St. Columba. He was of noble birth, having been born of a consular family in Belgic Gaul. At an early period he renounced the world and devoted himself to the service of Christ. By his example he converted his elder brother, Venantius; and the two ardent devotees set out, along with an aged Christian friend named Caprasius, on a pilgrimage to the sacred sites of the East, having previously given away all their possessions to the poor. Venantius died in Messina, and Honoratus received what he considered a divine intimation in a dream to leave the East and repair to the island of Lérins, or Planaria, to which he afterwards gave his name. When he reached this spot, in the year 410 of our era, he found the coast and the island utterly desolate. Cannes was then only a little collection of huts huddled together on the top of Mont Chevalier, surrounded by melancholy marshes covered with a perfect forest of waving reeds; and the isle that was destined to be his home was a howling wilderness, overrun with tangled brushwood, and swarming with serpents that crawled among the ruins of the old Roman town of Vergoanum, and prevented anyone from landing on the shore by the terror which they inspired. In this dreary solitude St. Honorat took up his abode, and being ordained by his friend Leontes, the bishop of Fréjus, he set himself to establish a monastery on the island. The fame which he had acquired by his holy life and deeds of beneficence drew to him devotees from all parts, and soon

the place was transformed into a garden; the serpents were extirpated, the brushwood was cut down; a well of sweet water, the knowledge of which for hundreds of years had been lost, was rediscovered; and a church was built, around which the cells of the monks began to rise.

It was not, however, as a refuge from heartweariness and disappointment that the monks fled to this retreat. It was not a youth from which all the fragrance had vanished under the terrible pressure of misfortune that they conserved in that cloistered death, like a pressed violet between the leaves of a holy book. They devoted themselves, on the contrary, to the service of God and their fellow-men, and kindled the flame of a divine love on the hearths of hearts where no previous flame of human love had burnt out in its own grey ashes. Nor did they spend their time in this solitude merely in idle fasting and selfish prayer. Their institution was, properly speaking, not a monastery, but, like the Columban house at Iona, a seminary of sacred learning, a centre of missionary enterprise. From time to time suitably qualified men were sent out from the island in all directions to preach the gospel, to baptize converts, to visit and heal the sick, and to instruct the ignorant. Like a streamlet that diffuses to the populous dwellers on its banks far down in the valley the blessings it has gathered from the clouds in the lonely places among the hills, these monks retired from the world that they might communicate to men in their own busy haunts the high thoughts and impulses that had come to them from the inspiration of the desert. And in all monastic annals there is no picture more touching and beautiful than that which is given by one of the most illustrious disciples of St. Honorat of the character of their chief, and of the daily life of the institution. He inspired them with his own noble self-sacrificing spirit, and they all loved him with the deepest affection, and found in him concentrated all the domestic relations and pleasures which they had abandoned for the sake of their religion. It was even said that when he wrote to the absent members of the fraternity, on tables covered, according to the usage of the time, with wax, "he restored its honey to the wax from the sweetness of his own heart." And one of the most popular poems of Provence, written by a monk of Lérins, still preserves the wonderful popularity which he enjoyed, and mixes up the biography of the saint with the romantic traditions of the age of Charlemagne and Girat de Roussillon.

The great monastery of Lérins, thus auspiciously founded, became for hundreds of years the centre of religious life for the whole of Southern Europe. The churches of Arles, Avignon, Lyons, Vienne, Troyes, Riez, Fréjus, Valance, Metz, Nice, etc., obtained from this "happy isle," as it was universally called, their most illustrious bishops. Several of the foremost names in ecclesiastical history were educated at Lérins, and ruled over the monastery. Among them may be mentioned St. Hilary of Arles, who performed for St. Honorat the same biographical service

which Adamnan performed for St. Columba; Salvian, who was by far the most eloquent man of his age, and who, though only a simple monk, was called "the master of bishops"; St. Eucher, who wrote two widely popular and influential treatises on "Solitude," and on "Contempt of the World and of Worldly Philosophy"; St. Lupus, who arrested the steps of Attila at the gates of Troyes, as Leo the Great afterwards arrested them at the gates of Rome, and to whom the fierce King of the Huns gave the famous answer, when asked by the saint who he was, "I am Attila, the scourge of God"; St. Cæsarius, for half a century the most illustrious of the bishops of Southern Gaul, who battled successfully with Alaric and Theodoric for the rights of the Church against the aggressions of the civil power, and who suffered banishment and imprisonment for his heroism; and lastly, perhaps the greatest and best known of them all, St. Vincent of Lérins, the most accomplished controversialist of his time, who originated the oft-quoted test for orthodoxy, "Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus creditum est," and who has preserved in his name, as perhaps the most worthy of the honour, the memory of the little island in which he had been educated. Nor should we omit from this list of most illustrious sons the name of St. Patrick, who, while born on the banks of the Clyde, in Scotland, received, according to a well-attested tradition, his education as a Celtic missionary in the monastery of Lérins, and transferred to the Celtic Church the cœnobitic type of convent-life which he found there, so utterly different from the later monasticism of the Benedictines; and the prevalence of this type afterwards in the old abbeys of Ireland and Scotland can be traced to the influence of Lérins. The monastery of Lérins was involved in the great religious controversies of the Middle Ages regarding Pelagianism and Augustinianism, or the doctrines of free will and free grace, taking, upon the whole, the former view.

So mightily grew the reputation of the monastery that it obtained possession of a large portion of the land along the Mediterranean coast from Grasse to Barcelona. Cannes belonged to it, and the town paid to the abbot a tax on all its produce as the feudal superior. It had its flour-mill at Mougins, its saw-mill at Pégomas, and its vineyards at Vallauris. No less than three thousand seven hundred monks are said at one time to have lived on the island. But as its wealth and importance increased it became a great temptation to the Algerian corsairs, just as the monastery of Iona became to the Norwegian invaders. On one occasion, at the feast of Pentecost, no less than five hundred of the monks were slain, along with St. Porcaire, their abbot, and many were carried away as captives during a raid of the pirates apon the island. But not only did the monastery suffer from these outward attacks, it suffered still more from the constant quarrels between the monks and the secular or commendatory abbots, who in succession were forced upon them by time-serving Popes, and who cared only for the revenues of the house, and treated the monks

simply as serfs attached to the soil. Under this secular system of administration the monastery speedily decayed. It revived a little when placed, in the beginning of the sixteenth century, under the Benedictine order, and the abbots were chosen by the inmates of the house. But it received its death-blow when it was taken by the Spaniards in 1635. After this the monastery was secularised by the Government, and its surviving monks—only four in number—receiving an indemnity, retired into private life, and the island relapsed to its original state of desolation. It was exposed for sale, and was bought, first by a French actress who meant to build on it a summer villa, but she soon tired of the whim; and then by an English Protestant clergyman. When it came into the market again it was bought by the Cistercians, who rebuilt the chapel; and the tall belfry of the new convent now serves as a landmark to mariners. The chartularies of the old monastery are at Nice, a portion of which has been published; and the silver-covered reliquary, which once contained the bones of St. Honorat, is still preserved at Grasse, and is carried through the old town in the procession during the festival of the saint. It is a small arched wooden chest covered with silver plates, with grotesque figures representing the arrival of St. Honorat on the island, and his conquest of the serpents that infested it.

Ten miles north from Cannes, by a branch railway, is the town of Grasse, founded in the sixth century by a colony from Sardinia. Previous to this it existed as an obscure Ligurian village, the capital of the Deceates. Its name is supposed to have been derived from Crassus, a Roman general who conquered the territory. A small well in the place, from which he is supposed to have drunk, is still called after him. The town is most picturesquely situated, at a height above the sea of upwards of a thousand feet, on the south slope of the calcareous mountain called Rocavignon, which rises almost perpendicularly about seven hundred feet behind. The streets are exceedingly narrow and tortuous, and so steep that most of them can only be ascended by means of steps; but the houses, though plain, are generally well built of good substantial stone, for many of the noble families who lived in the neighbourhood had their town houses in Grasse. Formerly the seat of a bishop, the town has in its centre a cathedral, with a tall square campanile, which on the outside is almost entirely Italian in its style of architecture, borrowed evidently from Pisa and Genoa, with which Grasse had close commercial relations at one time. The interior, however, seems to partake more of the architectural style of the north, for the solid square groins of the roof are supported upon massive circular piers with cushioned caps. When the building was repaired in the seventeenth century, two additional crypts were cut out of the rock. The cathedral occupies the site of a Roman temple dedicated to Jupiter. The interior contains nothing worthy of special mention, with the exception, perhaps, of a painting behind the high altar representing the "Ascension of the Virgin," by Subleyras. At the entrance of the

Photo, Giletta, Nice.

General View of Grasse.

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town there is the still older church of St. Sauveur, a little circular building with flat shallow buttresses, dating from the eleventh century, now used as a powder magazine. Near at hand is the hospital, the chapel of which, built in the seventeenth century, contains three inferior pictures attributed to Rubens—the "Crown of Thorns," the "Elevation of the Cross," and the "Crucifixion." The Emperor Alexander of Russia offered four thousand pounds to their possessor, M. Perolle, who refused to sell them, but presented the pictures to the church.

More interesting are the paintings of Jean Horace Fragonard, a native of Grasse, who died at Paris in 1806, and whose canvases seem quickened with the gay and fashionable world of the eighteenth century. Those which best show his technical qualities are the five pictures representing the sports of childhood and youth, painted to the order of the celebrated Countess du Barry for the decoration of the magnificent château which Louis XV. built for her at Luciennes. These pictures were never sent to their destination owing to the breaking out at the time of the storm of the French Revolution, and may now be seen in the house where they were painted in the panels of a room, furnished in the pure Louis Quinze style, and untouched for more than a hundred years. In one of the old fashioned houses in the centre of the town there is a curious painting, representing a rural scene, a patchwork composition made by a number of Frankfort artists, each of whom painted in what he could do best. It is interesting chiefly for the fact that it was executed in the house of Goethe's father in the presence of the poet himself when a boy, during the French occupation of Frankfort, at the order of the French commander, Count de Thorannes, who was a native of Grasse. The Hôtel de Ville was formerly the bishop's palace; it has connected with it a great square tower of beautiful architecture coeval with the founding of the cathedral. The substructures of not a few of the houses of Grasse, show traces of the massive architecture of the ancient palaces inhabited by the merchant princes of the place, which resembled those of Genoa; and the picturesque staircase of one of these splendid abodes is still preserved in an old house. Grasse has a number of quiet and comfortable boarding houses, a club, a circulating library, and an English church. Her Majesty Queen Victoria spent the month of April several years ago in the Grand Hotel de Grasse, which was rented from its proprietor. Standing in a high position it overlooks the town, and is surrounded by extensive grounds, where all the privacy of a villa residence can be enjoyed.

Grasse is well supplied with delicious water, and its fountains, old and new—of which the inhabitants are very proud—are continually murmuring and sparkling, and spreading around them a very pleasant coolness in the sultry noon. The climate is remarkably mild and salubrious, affording a most agreeable change from the heat and dust of Cannes. From its terraces, owing to its elevated position, the town commands the most beautiful and extensive views. Those of the snow-

covered Alps to the north, and of the plains covered with hoary olives down to the sea, from the promenade of the Cours, are exceedingly striking. Still more extensive views of distant mountain chains may be obtained from the stony plateau on the top of Rocavignon, behind the town, to which there is an excellent carriage road. From this point may be seen, a short way off, the romantic spot, called the Plain of Napoleon, at the foot of a limestone cliff with a cavern in it, from which issues a small stream, where, under the shadow of a tall cypress, Napoleon, on the second day of March, 1815, halted and took a mid-day meal on his way to St. Vallier, after his escape from Elba. Among the neighbouring mountains fine marble of various colours, beautiful alabaster and jasper are found in great quantities, so that even in the poorest houses of Grasse one sees marble chimney-pieces, jasper tables, and alabaster mirrors and clocks.

Godeau, the famous French wit, called Grasse *Gueuse Parfumée* or "scented slut." But this nickname, so far as one part of it is concerned, is no longer applicable. The gueuse has been reformed, and the air of the place now always smells as sweet as a conservatory, and is filled with the continual murmur of fountains. Broad acres of vivid hues flash in the burning sun. All around the gardens and terraces are devoted, for the sake of their essences, to the culture of white roses, white jasmines, heliotropes, tuberoses, violets, lavender, and other odoriferous plants. Orange and lemon trees are cultivated for the sake of their blossoms and not their fruit; the flowers being more valuable since they are used in large quantities for the preparation of neroli, which forms the base of Eau-de-Cologne, and for the manufacture of orange-flower water, so largely consumed in the cafés of France. A short or stunted species of acacia, *A. Farnesiana*, about the size of a large gooseberry-bush, is also grown extensively for the sake of the perfume extracted from its rich yellow globular flowers. The town of Grasse carries on the largest manufacture of perfumery in France, if not in the world. This is the chief trade of the place; the annual value of the perfumes, sent chiefly to Paris, amounting to a quarter of a million sterling. Much of the so-called attar of roses, supposed to come from Constantinople, and put up in the long slender familiar gilt bottles that seem to certify its eastern origin, is made here.

A visit to the distilleries is exceedingly interesting. Her Majesty during her stay at Grasse visited the great factory of M. Chiris, and was much pleased with all that she saw. There are two processes constantly carried on for extraction of the scents of flowers—the hot and the cold method. The attar of roses and the neroli are produced by the simple distillation of the blossoms of the rose and orange in hot water whose temperature is carefully regulated. In other cases the flowers when newly gathered are placed between slates with thick heavy frames well covered with lard, which absorbs the odoriferous particles. The flowers are renewed twice or

three times a day, and the operation is repeated from thirty to sixty times, until the lard is completely saturated with the odour of the flowers. It is then scraped off and washed in spirits of wine, which, combining with the volatile oil, rise to the top and are skimmed off and filtered. Great skill has been attained in imitating the special odours of flowers, which are so tenacious of yielding up their sweetness as not to repay the labour of extraction. All the citrine odours—which form an important ingredient in Eau-de-Cologne—verbena, and lavender require French or grape spirit; while jasmine and violet are best preserved by English or corn-spirit. By combining in certain proportions volatile oils which harmonise with one another so as to produce one aromatic expression, the scent of almost any flower may be successfully imitated.

The growth and manufacture of these perfumes must make Grasse a peculiarly salubrious place. It has been proved that the growth of sweet-smelling flowers and aromatic or resinous trees speedily makes an unwholesome or malarious district healthy; and it is well known that persons employed in perfume manufactories enjoy a wonderful immunity from infectious and epidemic diseases. Not merely, therefore, for its romantic scenery and quaint old-world architecture, and for its fragrant, refreshing atmosphere and its rich fields of flowers and falling waters, is Grasse to be recommended as a residence for the invalid, but also for sanitary reasons, which probably have not yet received sufficient attention. Against these advantages, however, must be set-off the fact that some visitors find at Grasse the all-pervading pollen of flowers exceedingly trying, producing a form of hay fever; and it is said that those who are employed in picking orange-blossoms on the farms for the distilleries—men as well as women—not unfrequently fall into a kind of fainting fit owing to the peculiar effect of the pollen upon the nervous system. In the light of these curious incidents, one can understand the otherwise strange sanitary rule which used to be enforced in Jerusalem, that the inhabitants were not to grow roses or cultivate flower-gardens within the walls of the city.

The flower-farms of Grasse are more valuable than those at Mitcham in Surrey, where lavender and peppermint grow like brooms and nettles on the wild wolds of Yorkshire. Its orange-blossoms are unrivalled; and its roses, for the manufacture of the attar, compete successfully with those of Ghazepore, in India, or even with those which grow in the districts of the Balkans in Turkey. Land, as might be expected, considering the high commercial value of flower-farming, is very dear. The proprietors do not let their acres to tenants at a fixed price, but make an agreement with the owner of a laboratory, who works the farm and gives a third of the profits to the owner. Small landholders sell their flowers direct to the laboratories. Roses yield a pretty fair harvest in the second year; but it is not till the fourth year that their full powers of production are developed; a plantation of roses

lasting in good order for about eight or nine years if well kept, and each season producing five thousand pounds' weight of blossom per acre. Cassia plants are raised from seed, and then transplanted in rows, where they ultimately reach a height of twelve feet, and yield a successful crop of flowers, some being ready for plucking when others are scarcely in bud, each tree producing about three pounds' weight of blossoms. Orange-trees are also cultivated from seed, each tree requiring about twelve years to reach maturity, but producing flowers and fruit in the fourth or fifth year. When in full vigour, the annual yield of each tree is almost thirty pounds' weight of blossoms. The jasmine is planted like raspberry-canes with us, and is supported by horizontal sticks placed between the rows, over which they twine. Each slip is grafted at the end of two years with the Spanish jasmine, which produces a blossom of larger size and more intense fragrance. Each acre of about eight thousand plants yields about four thousand pounds' weight of blossoms. Violets require special care, as they are apt to be burnt up with the fierce heat of summer. They are therefore planted in dense clusters about a foot apart under the shadow of orange and lemon trees, or close to shady walls. The period of flower picking varies with the character of the season and the time of the blooming, the orange-blossom harvest usually extending over a month. It is done by women and girls, each having a little basket at her side suspended by a strap across her shoulders, both hands being actively engaged in picking the flowers. The wages for women who do this light idyllic work are about eighteenpence per day; and for the men, who do the heavy work of cultivating the flower-farms, about half-a-crown. A large proportion of the population of Grasse is employed in connection with this remarkable industry—either cultivating the farms, picking and sorting the blossoms, or carrying on the various processes of *enfleurage* or distillation, packing the bottles, or making straw-plait for the cases. There are also, in the town, glass-works for the manufacture of the bottles; foundries for the coppers and stills; joiners' shops for making the packing-cases; and soap works for the utilisation of the exhausted lard. All this traffic, which year by year is steadily increasing, is helping to make the people of Grasse more prosperous and comfortable than those of any other town in the Riviera, and has risen almost within the lifetime of the present generation. Grasse, indeed, has always been known for its perfumes, and especially for its perfumed gloves, which were as famous in their own day as the leather of Cordova. But it was not till M. Perolle, who presented, as already mentioned, the Rubens pictures to the chapel of the hospital, opened up a direct communication with Paris, by sending thither some boxes of his perfumes, that the trade branched out to France, Russia, Germany, America, and became cosmopolitan.

Grasse is a capital centre for expeditions to a crowd of most interesting places: to Mouans-Sartoux, with its massive castle of the sixteenth century, shaded by umbrella pines, and its Roman tombs, walls, and inscriptions, reminding the visitor

of the Roman Sartorius, to which wealthy and patrician families from Italy, in those far-off times, used to come for change of air and quietude in summer; to Pégomas, on the banks of the Siagne, with its tall poplars, and its fields and olive-woods blazing with anemones, where the lamented Annie Keary spent the last winters of her life, and wrote one or two of her most charming novels. In her biography we have a most delightful picture of the rural life of the place. Mougins, too, is not far off, the Roman Mouginum, or Mons Ægitna, perched on its steep isolated hill, and famous not only for its numerous Roman remains, but also for the beauty of its peasantry, who seem to have retained uncontaminated their ancient Roman descent. Up the olive-covered hills to the north-east of Cannes, there is a height marked by a solitary cypress which overshadows the little rustic chapel of St. Antoine. On the other side of the path is a stone pillar with holy water stoup, and surmounted by an iron cross. This spot commands one of the most magnificent views to be obtained in the whole region, backed by the snowy summits of the Alps. On the crest of a lofty hill on the road from Cannes to Grasse is the ancient town of Auribeau. About twelve miles beyond Grasse on the road to Digne is the remarkable natural bridge over the infant Siagne called the Pont à Dieu. It has been scooped out of the calcareous rock in the deep gorge of the imprisoned stream. But though very picturesque, it is not to be compared to the Pont d'Arc over the Ardèche, which is unrivalled for the grandeur of its rocky arch and the magnificence of the surrounding scenery. About nine miles west of Grasse, standing on the edge of a lofty precipice overlooking the valley of the Siagne, is the village of St. Césaire, which still possesses some remains of its ancient gates and walls. Outside the village in the quaint churchyard is the simple old church, which dates from the beginning of the thirteenth century, and has a curious carved font of great antiquity in front of one of its doors. But the grandest of all the drives in the neighbourhood of Grasse, and that which Queen Victoria most frequently took, during her residence in the place, is eastward along what may be called a Corniche road. On this route may be seen the quaint village of Le Bar perched on the steep slope of a hill, with its church containing two remarkable mediæval paintings which figured conspicuously in the late Paris Exhibition, and dominated by the relics of a great castle of the Middle Ages owned by the Counts of Grasse; and farther on the extraordinary human eyrie of Gourdon built upon a seemingly inaccessible crag rising up at a great height above the gorge of the river Loup, which a short distance beyond forms a famous waterfall called the Saut du Loup, well worthy of a visit.

On many of the hills in the neighbourhood there are ruins of prehistoric camps constructed by the primitive Celto-Ligurian population against their enemies, who, like the Saracens of later times, seem to have come upon them by way of the sea-shore. Monsieur Sénequier, of Grasse, has written an interesting monograph upon

these curious remains, in which he describes those of Le Rouret, Roquefort, Le Bar, Gourdon, Escragnolles, and Seranon. They all present nearly the same features, consisting of a double *enceinte* of walls, about ten feet in thickness, built of enormous stones without cement; while fragments of very coarse, ill-baked pottery strew the ground within and without the enclosures. They look not unlike the ruins of sheepfolds in the Scottish Highlands. The peasants call them simply *leis murassos*, "the walls," having no knowledge of their significance. The camp of St. Vallier is the most remarkable of the series. In the vicinity of this camp there are two prehistoric tombs or dolmens, in one of which were found red and black pottery ornamented with horizontal bands, hatchets of polished serpentine, and several flint implements, and also a great quantity of bones, and especially teeth, in excellent preservation, indicating this to be the site of some ancient battle. On the top of one of the hills there is a flat inclined boulder, having on its surface a large polished artificial basin; also a bowl-shaped excavation with a rough channel cut in the stone leading to the end of the boulder. There is another huge tabular boulder in the neighbourhood; perched like a rocking-stone on the edge of a precipitous rock. It is called by the peasants *Caïsso brunado*, or "the brown chest." On its surface are five round excavations, which are identical with the cup-marks found in great abundance in our own country and all over the world, and which must have been connected with libations and other practices of prehistoric worship. They belong to the later Neolithic period. The peasants account for the cup-marks on the *Caïsso brunado* by a legend similar to those myths which exist in all other countries where such cup-marks occur. Charlemagne and Roland were one day amusing themselves on the hills of St. Vallier. They wished to find out which could throw the largest stone farthest. Charlemagne took the *Caïsso brunado*, and flung it an immense distance beyond his rival's stone, to the spot where it is now found. A fragment of it broke off when it struck the ground, and lies now with two distinct cup-marks on it. The five hollows in the boulder are the five finger-marks of the mythical emperor.

North-west from Grasse by Digne and Sisteron is the important Alpine town of Gap, the ancient Civitas Vappium, with a population of nine thousand, and situated at a height of nearly three thousand feet above the level of the sea. It is the burial-place of the famous commander of the Huguenots, Lesdiguiéres, and the birth-place of William Farel the Reformer. It was here that the famous social dance called the "Gavotte" originated. It was practised first by the Gavots or men of the Pays de Gap. Its peculiarity was that the dancers lifted their feet from the ground, while in other dances they walked or shuffled. It was a jubilant dance. The name "Gavotte" was also given to the music accompaniment. Handel, Glück, and Bach have left specimens of this class of composition. It is a curious coincidence that another Alpine town between Turin and Nice, called Carmagnola, should also have

View from the Park.

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Hôtel Métropole, Cannes.

originated a famous dance and song, the "Carmagnole," associated with the tragedies of the French Revolution.

Several eminent persons are connected with Grasse, whose associations with the old town give it a special interest. The foundations and the stone stairs of the palace in which lived for a short time Jeanne, the celebrated Countess of Provence and Queen of Naples, may still be seen in the Place des Aires. Like Mary Queen of Scots—whose charm of manner and person she possessed, and whose history her own strongly resembled—the guilt, both as wife and queen, of this remarkable woman must ever remain one of the great mysteries of history. Her reign is considered by the peasants of Provence to have been like that of the good Queen Bertha of Switzerland—a golden age; the halo of her dazzling qualities and of her fidelity to her native land having thrown into the shade, in their imaginations, the memory of her crimes and vices. She was a pupil of Boccaccio, who wrote regarding her in some of the more frivolous pages of the "Decameron," and the friend of Petrarch. Giotto painted some pictures for her, including her own portrait; the famous troubadours, Pierre Vedàl and Sordello, sang of her charms; and Pope Clement VII.—a subject of her own—whose cause, in the contest between the eastern and western Popes, she espoused, gave her the "golden rose," a favour granted to very few. Her correspondence with St. Catherine of Siena, who supported the rival Pope Urban VI., is very curious. The high-minded saint reproached the worldly-minded queen with all the vices of the antipope, and threatened her that unless she repented she should be visited with dark days of adversity. As if in fulfilment of these threats, the Queen was smothered in her bed, or, as others say, strangled when at her prayers, in the Castle of Muro, in Naples, by a company of Hungarian soldiers, on the 12th May, 1382, by order of Charles of Durazzo. In whatever light we view her, this Queen Jeanne was the most fascinating and the most dangerous woman of the fourteenth century. Her history reads like a romance.

In the huge gloomy-looking house which stands near the steps leading up to the Cours at Grasse, called the Hôtel Mirabeau, lived, at the close of the eighteenth century, Louisa, the youngest sister of the famous French orator, who possessed all her brother's wonderful genius and eloquence, combined with the same utter absence of moral feeling. She was married to the half-insane Marquis de Cabres, whose armorial bearings of gilt goats' heads (Cabres) still appear on the alcove of the hotel; and in company with her brother, the future statesman, led a life at Grasse which caused no end of scandal in the quiet town. So grievously was the decorum of the community outraged, that when Mirabeau solicited the votes of the inhabitants with the view of entering upon political life, he was indignantly rejected as their deputy, and was obliged to seek elsewhere for a more complaisant commune. After the death of Mirabeau, the fierce rage of the revolutionists broke out against his sister's

husband, whose castle was sacked by the mob, and he himself was obliged to flee for his life. The Marquise, before the attack, hastily collected the family papers, and placed them in the hands of the family notary at Grasse, hoping to be able to reclaim them when better times should come. These hopes were not, however, realised; and the papers consequently still remain in the possession of the descendant and representative of this notary at Grasse. After many years the Marquis and his wife returned to their home from their dreadful exile, after having undergone all the horrors of the French Revolution. The Marquise was sadly changed by all that she had passed through; she had learned wisdom from her sufferings, and building a humble cottage out of the ruins of their castle, she nursed her husband in his helpless imbecility with exemplary devotion, and so ended with a halo of repentance her most eventful life.

Another conspicuous figure of the French Revolution was born in Grasse in 1758, and educated in its quiet shade. This was Maximin Isnard, the fierce orator of the Convention, who possessed all the eloquence of Mirabeau, joined with a lofty austerity of morals of which Mirabeau knew nothing. This gift of eloquence seems to have been a family possession, as we find another relative of the same name, Jean Isnard, a talented writer and orator, also born at Grasse. Maximin Isnard began his career as a maker of soap in his native place; but proving unsuccessful, he left Grasse, after his marriage, to establish a soap business at St. Raphaël. But there, too, fortune seemed to have deserted him, and he soon found a more congenial sphere in launching out publicly in fierce invectives against the Government, and against the social and religious abuses of the day. His recklessness obliged him at last to flee from his native land. After the fall of Robespierre he came to the front as a member of the Legislative Assembly, and exerted a powerful influence by his extraordinary eloquence. Isnard preserved his deep love for his native place unchanged amid all the vicissitudes of his life; and when Napoleon became First Consul, he solicited from him the post of receiver of customs at Grasse. Napoleon granted the boon with the memorable words, "Give the wolf a bone to gnaw," and accompanied it with the title of baron, which Isnard accepted, and so compromised his reputation in his native place. Isnard died at Grasse in 1825, having employed the leisure of his closing years in writing a treatise on the immortality of the soul, which he dedicated to Pius VII., as an expression of his sympathy with the Pope in his trying misfortunes.

Photo, Giletta, Nice.

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The Sea-shore, Mentone.

A general map
of the
RIVIERA
1902.
Scale of English Miles.
0 5 10 20 30 40 50
G. OF GENOA
ALESSANDRIA
DIGNE
Castellane
DRAGUIGNAN
Brignolles
S. Tropez
7 Longitude East of Greenwich.

LIBRARY
OF THE
BOMB
ERAN
OF
ARIA

III.

VALLAURIS, ANTIBES, AND CAGNES.

ABOUT half-way between Cannes and Antibes is the well-known village of Vallauris, the seat of one of the most interesting and important industries of the Riviera. It is a remarkable example of the persistent continuance of an art in one place. In the days of the Romans this place was famous for its artistic pottery, which competed successfully even with the Samian and Etruscan ware. In the surrounding mountains a peculiar calcareous clay, of a reddish or greyish colour, belonging to the Pleiocene formation, is found in thin layers near the surface. This material is admirably adapted for the purposes of the potter, and originated the industry which brought the place into notice. After a time the manufacture of artistic pottery decayed. The demand for it, and the ability to produce it, ceased during the barbarous ages which followed the decline and fall of the Roman Empire. During the intervening centuries the village maintained a struggling existence by the manufacture of a coarse cheap kind of domestic ware of the Marmite class, which is not injured by being placed on a fire. At last Clement Massier, with a genius akin to that of Wedgwood and Palissy, conceived the idea of adding to this manufacture of *poteries refractaires* the construction of ware that might be worthy of being called artistic, and reviving the old Roman fame of the place. He qualified himself by travelling through Italy and inspecting the museums of Etruscan pottery. By laborious experiments he succeeded in perfecting a number of glazes, distinguished for the fineness of their quality and the beauty of their colours. The blues, from a pale delicate tint, to a deep, dark, ocean-like hue, are peculiarly rich and effective. So also are the different shades of olive and yellowish brown. M. Massier has imitated all the old Etruscan shapes, and invented some new ones, which are not inferior in artistic elegance; and a visit to the pottery, where the process may be seen in all its stages, will prove interesting. Besides the works of Massier, those of Guirard and others in the village are well worthy of inspection. The abundance of fine clay suitable for the purpose in different parts of the Riviera has given rise to various kinds of potteries, which have received the names of the places where they are manufactured. At Nice there is a pottery where ware somewhat like that of Vallauris is manufactured on a small scale, on a plain, highly glazed surface of a

deep sienna brown, streaked with lighter blue markings; while at Monaco is produced a splendid kind of pottery, the peculiarity of which consists of wreaths and sprays of raised flowers in high relief laid upon the surface of the articles. Some contend that the glazed earthenware called *faïence* or *fayence*, received its name not from the town of Faenza near Bologna, but from Fayence, a little Provençal village high up among the folds of the hills behind Grasse. There is no doubt that pottery of a similar nature to this famous ware was made in this village as early as the sixth century; and there is a letter in existence in which Pope Gregory, in 590, thanks one of the Abbots of Lérins for a present of some shallow basins and plates supposed to have come from Fayence.

Vallauris is a corruption of the ancient Roman name, *Vallis aurea*, probably bestowed upon it on account of the yellowish-red colour of its clay used in the manufacture of the old ware, or, as some think, on account of the profusion and excellence of its golden oranges, for which it was as celebrated then as now. There are few traces of Roman occupation now remaining. In the wall of a house in the main street opposite the church is built a broken slab, with a Latin inscription referring to the construction of a road in the neighbourhood by the Emperor Tiberius. And about two miles to the north-east, at Clausonne, there are the ruins of a Roman aqueduct, constructed to convey water to Antibes, locally known as the Pont-de-Vallauris. Some of the arches, especially those near the chapel of St. Nicholas, are in tolerable preservation; and the whole aqueduct forms a most picturesque feature in the midst of the wild mountain scenery. No more suitable subject for the artist's pencil could be seen anywhere, combining, as it does, so many objects of interest, and uniting so charmingly the far-off past and the present, the Christian church and the Pagan monument. The streets of Vallauris, like those of all southern mountain villages, are narrow and picturesque. It was formerly surrounded by fortified walls, and the ruins of the gates can still be seen, on one of the stones of which is the quaint inscription, "It is open to God; it is shut to the devil." This is a relic of the period when the town belonged to the monks of Lérins, in the tenth century. There is an ancient chapel, built by the abbots of Lérins in the early part of the twelfth century, with the same ornamentation and style of architecture as the chapel of St. Anne at Cannes. It is now occupied as an oil mill. A column was found in it bearing the inscription, "Constantine, Emperor, father of his country." The old castle built as a summer residence for the abbots of Lérins was destroyed in the fourteenth century by a famous brigand, Raymond de Turenne, who ravaged the whole coast of Provence, and restored in the sixteenth century by Régnier de Lascaris, one of the monks of Lérins. It is well worthy of a visit, if only for the sake of its magnificent stone staircase. The same benefactor rebuilt the town of Vallauris, on a regular plan with good streets placed at right angles, for the accommodation of the workmen employed in the potteries. The great day in the annals of Vallauris is the fête of its

Photo, Giletta, Nice.

Vallauris.

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patroness, St. Anne, on the 26th July. Formerly the curious custom existed here of defending or apologising for the dead at the grave, but as it led to many abuses it has been abolished.

The scenery about Vallauris is wild and varied. Though situated at a considerable elevation above the level of the sea, it is nevertheless in a hollow, surrounded by gneissic hills, and, farther off, woods of pine and arbutus. It occupies the site of an ancient lake. The view from it is therefore somewhat circumscribed. But on the steep ascent to it from Cannes, and at the highest part of the Corniche Road above it, winding along the face of the pine-clad mountains, magnificent views of the western side of Cannes and the Esteral Mountains, and of the picturesque region to the east in the direction of Nice, may be obtained. From the charming site of the Chapel of Notre Dame de Grace, with its avenue of splendid cypresses, the view down the valley to Golfe Jouan is particularly beautiful, contrasting its rich cultivation with the wild ruggedness behind. The blue shadows of the olive and pine woods have a peculiar velvet softness in the distance, upon which the eye rests with pleasure. Among the moist rocks behind the town may be found stray tufts of the very rare and lovely little fern, the *Stemonitis leptophylla*. The Hill of the Incourdoules, a striking eminence 600 feet high, about half an hour's walk to the north-east of Vallauris, is remarkable for the immense number of ancient ruins, columns, capitals, lintels, and inscriptions strewn over its plateau. The remains of a tomb were found here bearing the inscription "Balbiæ T. at Ermanæ M. Multilius Paternus et Lucilia alumnæ et sibi. Posteris Q suis vivi fecerunt." The place must have been a Roman colony, as the old Aurelian road passes at its foot; and some antiquarians suppose that this, and not Cannes, was the Roman Ægitna. On the southern slope of the hill there is a curious cavern called the Cabro d'Or, with which is connected a strange legend that the Saracens, when expelled from that region, left behind in it the golden image of a goat, which they worshipped. Those who went in search of this treasure never returned; and hence the mountain got its ill-omened name of Incourdoules from *cordoleum*, which signifies heart-grief. It may be mentioned, however, that there is another version of this strange Provençal legend. It is said that the Knights Templars so far forgot the purity of their Christian faith that they adopted this heathen idol, and made it the object of secret and obscene rites. The origin and meaning of this curious form of idolatry are involved in hopeless mystery. It was put an end to, however, when François de Roustan, the commander, flung the golden goat over the steep hill of St. Croix de Pennafort, among the mountains beyond Grasse, in the year 1308, shortly before the violent suppression of the Order.

From Vallauris an omnibus takes one down the valley to the Golfe Jouan station, situated on the sea-shore in the midst of orange gardens. A few yards up from the station is a pillar marking the spot where Napoleon rested after his arrival

from Elba, on March 1st, 1815. He had with him a force of over a thousand men, composed largely of his former guard of grenadiers, and four pieces of artillery, which he left here when he departed at midnight through Cannes to Grasse. As if in memory of the former associations of the place, it is still often used for the manœuvres of the French soldiers stationed in the adjoining fort.

Three miles farther on is the interesting old town of Antibes. This seaport has had an almost uninterrupted existence since the fourth or fifth century before Christ, when it was founded by a Greek colony either from Nice or Marseilles. The story of the Greek settlements along this coast is exceedingly romantic. The Ionian wanderers from Phocæa, with the restless instincts of their race, found on these western shores the same picturesque mountain scenery, fertile valleys, fine climate, and varied coast-lines of sharp projections and deep recesses which characterised their own native land. After establishing the colony at Masilia, the modern Marseilles, they proceeded from thence to found Nice, and then Antibes. The ancient name of the latter place, Antipolis, indicates that it was over against the city of Nice, and that it was founded after it. A proof of its early Greek origin has recently been established by the discovery of a stone in the neighbourhood inscribed with archaic Greek characters. Hardly any traces remain of the Greek town; and of the Roman city afterwards built on its site, the only relics are two ancient towers in the centre of the modern town, one of them standing in the front of the church and used as a belfry, and the other forming part of an adjoining official building. It is only the Latin inscriptions that are built into the walls, however, that can be said to belong to the old Roman town, the general masonry of the towers clearly indicating that it cannot date farther back than the tenth century. There can be no doubt that in the time of the Romans the town had aqueducts, baths, theatres, and many public edifices. It was, indeed, famous for the beauty of its monuments. It possessed a highly efficient school for navigation. Traces of Roman graves are still occasionally found, as well as carved stones, inscriptions, mosaics, and coins. The parish church occupies the site of a temple of Diana; and as late as the beginning of the eighteenth century it was the custom in the church of the Franciscans to observe a species of saturnalia at Christmas and Epiphany. Persons dressed as priests, with clothes torn, and wearing spectacles with lenses of orange-peel, followed by a crowd, enacted in the church the most scandalous scenes, which were evidently relics of the old worship of Diana and Mercury peculiar to the place. The history of the town is a very stirring one. It was destroyed by the Goths in 478. It shared the same fate at the hands of the Lombards in 578. The Saracens held possession of it for many years during the seventh century. In 1524 it was taken by the Constable Bourbon; in 1536 it was sacked by Charles V. The Duke of Savoy seized it in 1707, and forty years later it was bombarded by the English, and in 1813 by the Austrians. On the eastern side of the Rue Aubernon, some

fragments of old walls and a gateway with two large round towers may be observed, which probably enclosed the ancient city, whose dimensions seem much shrunken within the extensive area of the present fortifications. The Rue Aubernon itself probably occupied the site of the original ditch. During the Middle Ages the town bore the Provençal name of Antiboul, from which its modern name was easily derived.

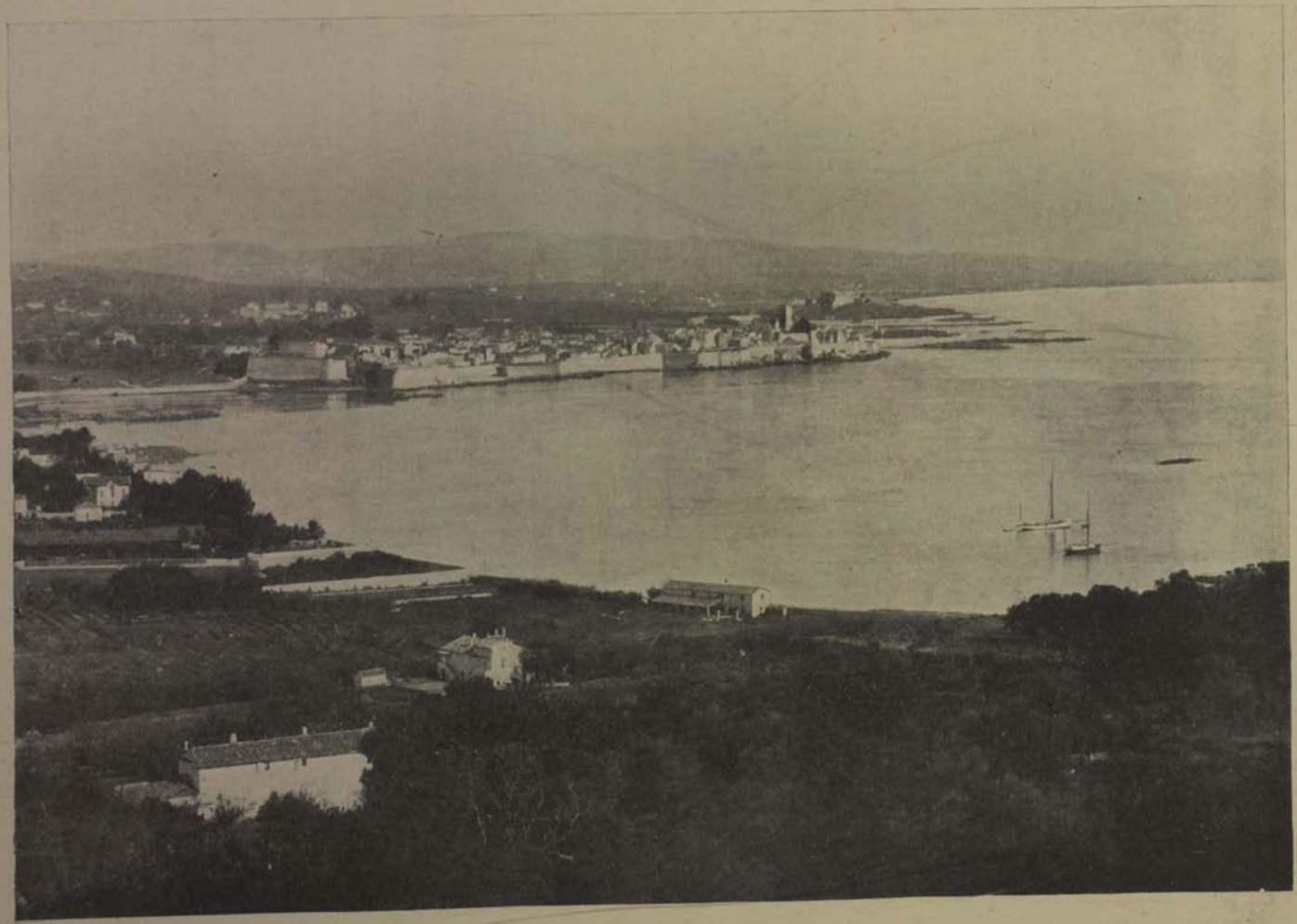
The position of Antibes early marked it out as a suitable site for an important town. It is built on an indentation of the coast forming a secure harbour. On the one side is a rocky promontory jutting out a considerable distance into the sea, called the Cape of Antibes or of La Garoupe. On the other is a succession of smaller and shorter promontories, which shape out the shore into little semi-circular bays perfectly sheltered from the mistral. These promontories are formed of primary or igneous rocks, and have successfully resisted the disintegrating action of the waves, which have worn away the calcareous rocks between. Similar promontories have been formed by similar igneous formations at Beaulieu and Villefranche. Indeed, one is struck with the remarkable resemblance between the roadstead of Antibes and the roadstead of Villefranche. The two towns, Nice and Antibes, are thus directly opposite each other, and we see how appropriate was the old Greek name of the latter place. It is a curious circumstance that the mediæval and modern towns have both perpetuated the military history of old town. It was formerly the headquarters of the army during the Roman occupation. The French have used it for a similar purpose. Its fortifications and the fortress in Fort Carré, on the graceful hill on the north side of the entrance to the harbour, built by Vauban in 1691, are remarkably strong and well preserved. These fortifications occupied a prominent place in the annals of the wars of the League and of the military movements of the French Revolution. Napoleon was for some time a prisoner at Fort Carré, and his mother resided near it in a small house.

A delightful walk may be enjoyed upon the conical hill of La Garoupe, by the terraced steps of the Via Crucis, passing fourteen chapels, representing the different incidents in the Passion of our Lord, and leading to the little church of Notre Dame d'Antibes at the end. This church is a very quaint old building, and is supposed to date from the ninth century. Behind it is a splendid lighthouse, from the top of which, at a height of 270 feet above the sea, a most magnificent view of sea and coastline as far eastward as Bordighera and San Remo may be obtained. Westwards the view is limited by the promontory of La Croisette, which completely hides Cannes and Grasse. Inland may be seen a succession of rugged mountain ranges and lofty precipitous rocks, terminating in the far background with the snowy Alps, whose every peak and glacier, from Lescheréne to the Col de Tenda, may be seen clear cut like a cameo against the cloudless sky. This

view, which is hardly to be surpassed anywhere else, is the crowning glory of Antibes.

In descending, a road leads to the celebrated garden of the Villa Theuret, open to the public every Tuesday. These gardens were bequeathed, by the distinguished botanist who formed them, to the French nation, and are now used as a Government school for the culture and study of semi-tropical trees and shrubs. Under the skilful supervision of the present curator, M. Naudin, they form one of the most charming spots in the Riviera. Here we may see collected together the luxuriant vegetation of Africa, Australia and Peru, which, planted round the towns and villages along the coast, has given to this region such a strange and foreign appearance; while the glimpses of the blue Mediterranean, the old fortress of Antibes, and of the far-off snowy Alps, seen through the rare trees and shrubs, and from the lawn glowing with the most brilliant anemones, greatly enhance the attractions of the gardens. The marvellous variety of rare irises kept up here form a complete flower-show in themselves. One of the chief curiosities of the place is the Quillaja, or soap-tree, of Chili, the inner bark of which has been brought into prominent use in England and France, on account of its rich saponaceous properties, which are especially valuable in the washing of fine coloured stuffs which might be injured by ordinary soap. It produces its rosaceous flowers here, and even ripens its fruits, the woody carpels of which are widely different from those of the rose tribe, to which it otherwise belongs.

It is said that the first Eucalyptus trees introduced into France were planted in these grounds in 1815. They may now be seen all along the Riviera, shooting up with amazing rapidity, and becoming in a dozen years or so fine forest-trees; and though some object to them on the ground that they are not ornamental, especially when they reach a certain age, they serve so many useful purposes, producing excellent timber, forming an antidote to the malarious influence of marshy and humid lands along the coast, that they may well be regarded as a very precious permanent addition to the sylvan treasures of Provence. And they are not wanting on the score of picturesqueness; their pendulous, slender, willow-like boughs forming an interesting contrast to the sturdy, rigid, spreading fronds of the palm. To the artist, their smooth clean trunks of a grey colour tinged with pink, their curious varieties of leaves, round or sickle-shaped, of a greyish-green glaucous colour unknown in our forest vegetation, and hanging down edgeways instead of spreading out horizontally, thus producing hardly any shade beneath them, and their strange buttons of white, fluffy, floss silk-like blossoms, all these peculiarities afford novel and interesting studies of tree-life. The trunk of the Eucalyptus sheds its long strips of bark in much the same way as the plane scales off its shorter and wider pieces The formation, texture, and chemical properties of the two kinds of leaves which the *Eucalyptus globulus* produces are different. The broad, sessile, horizontal



Photo, Giletta, Nice. *Antibes.*

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leaves have pores only on the under side, and are covered with strong resinous wax, which imparts to the young trees a dull, grey-green colour; while the pendant stalked leaves have breathing pores on both sides, exude very little wax, and notwithstanding their thick texture are swayed by the wind like aspen leaves. It may be remarked that the Eucalyptus is a living relic of the Eocene vegetation, which in this part of Europe had at one time numerous representatives, the myrtle being now almost the sole survivor. This curious Australian tree thus revisits, from the opposite part of the world, its old quarters, and links together the Eocene flora of the geologist and the far richer and grander flora of the present day. It is an old-world form of myrtle coming to keep company with its sister myrtle that has never forsaken its home, and adorn together the shores of Southern Europe. At Antibes it may be mentioned, in this connection, that a great many rare plants are found, among which may be enumerated the *Silene Nicæensis*, which grows openly on the sands of the seashore, flowering in May, and the *Ophioglossum Lusitanicum*, the little Portuguese moonwort, differing from the common species in having its frond linear lanceolate, which is found abundantly from December to January on the greensward close beside the sea on the Cap d'Antibes. The visitor will be struck here as well as in every other part of the Riviera, with a curious arum called, from the brown cowl-like shape of its spathe or hood, the Capuchin, growing abundantly and irrepressibly on the olive terraces, remarkable for the heat radiated by its pistil; and in the woods in winter, when few other flowers appear, the *Bellis sylvestris*, or Wood Daisy, which must not be confounded with the "wee, modest, crimson-tipped flower" of the poet, attracts attention by its large white flowers, reddish on the outside, elevated on stalks half a foot long; while in waste places the prickly broom (*Calycotoma spinosa*) displays in April its abundant golden blossoms, and replaces, though not with equal glory, the furze of the north, which does not occur in the Riviera, although it is abundant in the Pyrenees.

Beyond Antibes is the station of Vence-Cagnes. The town of Cagnes derived its name, like Cannes, from the tall canes which once grew, in greater abundance than now, around it. I may mention that this cane (*Arundo donax*) which grows in moist places and deep valleys, is one of the most characteristic plants of the Riviera, and is largely used for training the shoots of the vine along its props, and for forming slender fences and palisades. When covered with its graceful leaves, and plumed with its magnificent white blossom, it gives a peculiarly Eastern appearance to the landscape; and it is always interesting to the Bible student, on account of the uses to which it was put: as a pen with which to form the broad Hebrew letters in the prophet's roll, as a fictitious sceptre placed in the hands of Our Saviour in mockery, and as a rod for lifting to His dying lips the sponge filled with vinegar to allay His thirst. It is also a classic plant, for it was from this reed that Pan cut his pipes and drew out such piercingly sweet music. Cagnes existed in the time of the Romans,

and according to some authors an engagement took place near it between the Emperors Otho and Vitellius, whose forces occupied Cisalpine Gaul; although the prize of empire was lost and won not here, but at the decisive battle of Bedriacum, between Cremona and Mantua. The old town is perched, as usual on the top and slopes of a steep isolated eminence which is seen from afar. The houses are grouped round an old castle of the Grimaldi, whose crumbling polygonal tower has been modernised and converted into a comfortable residence; the machicolation being in many places cut away to receive the large modern windows opened in the walls. It is worthy of a visit for the sake of the fine painting on the ceiling of the Salée Dorée, representing the fall of Phaethon, which was the *chef-d'œuvre* of Carloni. This is the principal painting in this noble hall; but the walls are decorated with frescoes representing the whole history of Phaethon, executed with more or less skill. The columns are painted with such deceptive art on the walls that the room seems double its real height. The present owner has restored these paintings judiciously, and has added a rather interesting picture-gallery. There is also a finely sculptured marble fireplace in the "Belle Cheminée." The castle occupies the summit of the hill, but a little way down from it is the picturesque old church of Cagnes, dedicated to Notre-Dame la Dorée, to which Charlemagne presented some valuable votive offerings. And near at hand are the venerable ruins of the still older abbey church, or monastery, of St. Veran, which was originally a small quaint building, probably of the sixth century. The chancel is the only part that is in good preservation. The saint to whom this most interesting church is dedicated was a pupil of St. Honorat. He became, during the troublous times of the terrible Genseric reign, one of the first bishops of Vence, and founded a convent at the mouth of the Loup, the foundations of which are now built over by the mills of the Dorada. At the foot of the hill the modern town spreads itself somewhat irregularly over the plain, embosomed among luxuriant gardens, vineyards, and trees of all kinds. Owing to its low, rather damp position, it does not look a healthy spot, and in summer it is more infested with mosquitoes than any other part of the Riviera.

On the west side of Cagnes is the squalid village of Villeneuve Loubet, containing a fine old castle, built in the thirteenth century on the foundation of an older fort of the Saracens, and still retaining the original pentagonal tower and the vast subterranean dungeons. The slopes of the hill on which the castle is built are adorned with a wonderful maze of palms and palmettoes, mingled with the scarlet spikes of aloes and bushes of damask roses, blue veronicas, and foamy Spiræas. The ramparts command a splendid view of the wooded gorges of the Loup, which flows beneath the castle, and have embedded in them the decayed armorial bearings of the original owners, on which may still be traced the lances of the Villeneuves, and the star of Les Baux. The castle was built by Romée de Villeneuve, the great seneschal of Provence, immortalised by Dante as his noble Romeo, who died here in

1250. Numerous strange legends have locally gathered round his name, representing him as a poor wandering pilgrim, and as innocently accused of the most odious crimes by his enemies. To his wise judgment and uprightness the people were indebted for the framing of the "Statutes of Fréjus," which were for many centuries the written code of Provençal laws. In this castle Charles V. slept before going up to attack Grasse. Francis I. took up his abode in it after the memorable battle of Pavia; and Pope Paul III., who, as Alexander Farnese, had been Bishop of Vence, lived here when he came on a mission of pacification between the two great rival kings. Francis I. on this occasion was attended by Cardinal Lorraine, uncle of Mary Queen of Scots, and Antoine de Bourbon, the "father of the kings to be." From the top of the castle tower of Villeneuve may be seen rising above the pine-wood to the north-east another lofty tower of similar character called the Tower of La Trinité. It springs up from the ruins of a chapel crowning the summit of a very steep conical hill, and is approached by a series of winding staircases cut out of the rock, interrupted at intervals by walls and gateways, so that it was almost inaccessible to any armed force. It was originally a keep of the Templars, and passed from them to the Mathurins or Red Friars, who were called the Order of the Trinity, and whose special duty was to succour prisoners.

Antibes is a favourite residence with foreigners, and its numerous attractions are being more appreciated every year. It is more restful for the invalid than either Cannes or Nice, while the picturesque scenery in its neighbourhood is more accessible. In a few minutes, without fatigue, one can penetrate into the loneliest and wildest solitudes of nature; while over all the place an air of hoar antiquity broods, imparting a special interest to, and forming a pleasing background for, the scenes and incidents of the present. The high mountains which farther westward diverge from the coast and become indistinct, here gradually come nearer, and continue farther east to border the sea and to appear in the foreground. They rise behind Antibes in a series of high barren ridges, spurs from the Maritime Alps, the lower covered with olive woods, and the highest melting away in the purple of distance into the infinite peace of the sky.

The whole stretch of coast here is bordered by great depths of sea. Off the mouth of the river Var, however, which descends in the valley between two ridges of hills, the depth changes suddenly from 600 feet to 30 feet. Discoloured water, caused by the Var, often extends a considerable distance off shore. This river is the most formidable of all the Alpine torrents. In the summer its channel is a wide gully of sand and mud, through which a number of separate rivulets capriciously meander. But when the snows are melted on the mountains it is enormously swollen, and rushes down a mighty stream, laden with the soil and gravel which it has carried away from its higher gorges. Owing to the destruction of the old forests which once clothed the upper reaches of the river, the devastating effects of these sudden

inundations have been greatly increased. The projection of alluvial land formed in this way at the mouth of the Var is of comparatively recent origin, and did not probably exist when the Greeks and Romans came into possession of this coast. At that time there was a deep gulf, describing a single uniform curve, extending from Nice to Antibes. Indeed, comparatively recent maps show a bight where now exists the promontory of the Var. Of late years engineers have skilfully constructed parallel dykes, within which the flow of the river is safely confined; the marshes on either side have been reclaimed and made fertile, and plantations of Eucalyptus trees have converted a fever-stricken waste into a healthy and well-cultivated region, where malaria is unknown. On the left bank of the river there is an extensive racecourse and an interesting Acclimatisation Garden. The long railway bridge across the mouth of the Var, commanding a splendid view of the singular channel of the river, bounded on either side by rich olive-covered hills, and terminating in grand mountains capped with snow, is a most effective feature in the landscape.

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IV.

AN EXCURSION TO ST. JEANNET AND VENCE.

FROM every height in the neighbourhood of Nice one most remarkable object meets the eye looking westwards. This is the rock of St. Jeannet. It rises above the hoary, olive-covered ridges which bound the low horizon in that direction with startling abruptness, and is by far the most striking feature in the landscape. It seems more like a huge headland, breasting the stormy waves of the ocean, than an inland bluff terminating a long mountain ridge. And this impression which its weird appearance conveys to the imagination is confirmed by its strange geological history. It is in fact an old coral crag, that long ages ago looked down directly upon the Mediterranean at its foot like an ocean-sphinx, and mocked the foaming billows that dashed against it with its impassive defiance. Inch by inch every particle of the rock was secreted out of the brine, and built up into this enormous precipice by the labours of tiny corals. The mode in which it was formed may be illustrated by comparatively recent examples. Darwin found upon Keeling Atoll, in the Indian Ocean, evidences of change going on in the structure of the coral, passing gradually as he penetrated below the surface into a crystalline sparry structure, which was very hard and compact, and rang under the hammer. Greater changes still must have taken place in the older and lower parts of the reef; and there can be no doubt that if such a reef could again be examined after a period as long as that which has elapsed between the deposit of the coraline oolite and the present day, it would be found presenting very much the same appearance as that formation. In the same way the transformation of the old coral during untold ages into the present solid Jurassic limestone rock can be satisfactorily accounted for: and it is an interesting example of what the labours of zoophytes, aided by enormous pressure, the chemical forces of nature, and the slow effects of time, can accomplish in forming part of the massive foundations of the earth.

Marvellous are the effects of weathering and atmospheric colouring on the rock of St. Jeannet. Dark and forbidding as it looks in the distance, when standing out against the background of the western mountains and casting its shadows before it,

near at hand it presents a most fascinating appearance. It is broken up into a rich variety of forms. While its face is extremely precipitous and some parts are almost overhanging, it is diversified by so many rifts and ledges that it affords a fine field for the play of light and shade. In some places the rock glows like a coal in the heart of a furnace, and seems to radiate warmth around it; in others the white limestone looks so cool in the noonday refulgence, showing every outline wonderfully distinct through the soft clear atmosphere. For two successive hours it is never the same. It varies with the varying heavens and with the nearer or farther distance of the view-point. Fancy, quickened by its presence, could work its outlines into all kinds of mystic shapes, ghostly hints of gigantic figures which primitive art apparently copied from rocks like this, wizards and sphinxes and gods of old, fantastic as any poet's dream. What a beautiful variety of hues does it exhibit from morn to eve! At dawn the sunrise warms it with a rosy kiss, and one almost expects it to tinkle Memnon-like at the touch of the level rays into unearthly music. At noon it lifts up its calm cool brow against the blazing blue of heaven, like one of its own white clouds. In the afternoon its haggard features soften down with the dim mist-like shadows that veil them into an indescribable tenderness. At sunset it is incarnadined, like a snow peak that flushes in the glow of the slanting beams, and seems like a portal-pillar of the Delectable Mountains, beyond whose limit is the heavenly city and bliss ineffable. And at night to see its dusky mass relieved against the palpitating splendour of the stars, gaining in majesty and size what it loses in colour and detail, is a sight to fill the soul with a mysterious awe. Upon such pages does Nature love most to paint her pictures and write her runes; which only those who are in fullest sympathy with her, and who have, therefore, the insight that reads the "open secret" of the universe, can adequately interpret.

The road to St. Jeannet begins a short distance west from the long bridge over the Var, along which both the high road and the railway run side by side. It ascends gradually among olive-woods and lemon-gardens and all manner of rich cultivation, till it reaches the picturesque village of St. Laurent, well known in the old posting days as the custom-house station on the frontier between France and Italy, and said to be the place where the best figs grew, and the purest dialect was spoken in all Provence. The annexation of Nice to France, and the construction of the railway, carrying all the traffic past it, have, however, deprived it of its old occupation; and now it has a forlorn melancholy air about it, a look of decay, as if it had been shunted aside from the highway of life, and the only reason for its continued existence was simply the *vis inertiæ*. The northern horizon opens up as we ascend, and far ahead above the valley of the Var, above the dusky pines and hoary olives of the remotest uplands, above the desolate mountain tracks where the heaths and rosemaries finally end in bare grey rocks, one snowy peak after another rears itself right royally against the cloudless sky. The sun is shining with almost tropical warmth; the road

Photo, Giletta, Nice. *St. Jeannet.*

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is white and glaring; and the dust rests thick upon the wayside flowers, and upon the leaves of the cork trees and the pines and the yellow and orange hawk-weeds; but in the hot shade of the trees overarching the road it cools and invigorates one to gaze upon the spotless outline of that majestic range.

Nothing can be more picturesque than the position of the village of St. Jeannet, which received its name from the knights of St. John of Jerusalem. It lies on the precipitous slope at the foot of the great rock which rises above it considerably more than a thousand feet sheer into the air. In the forenoon the rock casts upon it a warm glow from its rosy surface; in the afternoon it throws the mantle of its shadow over it. Instead of being built upon the top of the rock, like the numerous other hill-villages in the neighbourhood, the labour of man thus appropriately dominating and crowning the labour of nature, the village of St. Jeannet kneels at the foot of the rock, as at the footstool of some great throne, on which is seated some mighty power, the embodiment of the spirit of nature to which it does homage. But the sympathy between the two is perfect. The buildings and the lower ledges of the crag have almost the same outlines, and very much the same colouring. In some lights the rock looks artificial, like a haughty feudal castle, and in others the houses of the village look like the natural ruins that have fallen from the cliff—a mere *débris* of the rock strewing the slope at its foot. Nature here grows into some likeness to humanity; and the close connection of the rock with the human lives that flourished and faded at its foot has given to the village something of the grandeur and stability of the rock, while it has given to the rock something of the touching interest that belongs to the changeableness of human life. Year after year, age after age, the rock has stood erect and unchanged, while the fleeting generations of man, like broken billows of the sea, have spent themselves at its foot. The village can afford to have one-half its horizon shut out by the rock. More than an equal space of clear sky would have done that rock does for it, for it reflects and concentrates the sunshine upon it, and creates a semi-tropical climate in which the verdure and fruitfulness are wonderfully luxuriant. The houses are embowered in a rare wealth of orange and lemon trees; and the olives display a shapeliness of trunk and a rich fulness of foliage uncommon elsewhere.

Through the narrow roughly-paved streets, with their overhanging dwellings, we climbed up, grateful for the cool shade which they afforded. Although a French village, it had a distinctly Italian look, and was decidedly more like the hill-villages to the east than those to the west of the Var. It had a quaint mediæval individuality about it, although it had none of the squalor or dirt usually associated with such places. An artist might find in it scores of picturesque little bits for pictures. The few people we met seemed well-to-do, and were busily engaged in garden work and in pruning their olives. The air was sweetened with the breath of the orange-blossoms, and seemed to lend a poetic fascination to each sight and sound. Beside

the village fountain, whose rejoicing water, filling the basin to overflowing and sparkling in the sunshine, was like an ever-new heart of gladness in the place, a sweet-looking maiden, dressed in rustic simplicity, gazed shyly at us with large dark eyes flashing their light over her olive cheeks, as she held her primitive pitcher to the liquid crystal. A very old woman, wrinkled and withered with the labours and sorrows of fourscore years, sat on the threshold of her home, her hands folded, as if the business of life for her were over. Curiosity and all human interest seemed to have died out of her, for she hardly looked up as we passed by and our shadow rested for a moment upon her door. A half-defined thought was awakened by the encounter, as to the strangeness of human lives thus touching each other like two circles only at one casual incidental point, and then vanishing into the far separate mystery out of which they came for a moment together. There is a popular saying still current that "all the women of St. Jeannet are witches." The wicked proverb probably originated from the malice of the Catholics during the religious wars of the League, when St. Jeannet was a stronghold of the Huguenots.

Hiring a guide, a smart youth who was working in a garden close by, and who very gladly put aside the hot labour of the mattock for a holiday, we quickly surmounted the highest part of the village, and struck to the right, where a path afforded a comparatively easy way of getting to the top of the mighty rock. The path was very rough, covered with small sharp stones, which rendered walking somewhat painful, and sadly battered our shoes. It quickly left the village behind and passed into an upland valley, where the last waves of the luxuriant vegetation below expired amid the bare grey rocks, upon which not even a lichen could grow. On the other side rose up the gaunt rugged cliff of La Gaude, at whose foot are the vineyards which produce one of the better wines of Provence; the most easterly of a row of four great calcareous cliffs extending to the Var, each more than two thousand feet above the sea. A torrent flowed down this valley between the two rocks in a series of cascades during the rainy season; but at the time of our visit it was quite dry, and the air felt hotter and the ground seemed more parched by the presence of that arid torrent-bed, suggesting what did not exist, and making the all-pervading consciousness of the drought such a visible, palpable reality. But, in spite of the universal desiccation, some fields of young sprouting wheat and beans managed to preserve a wonderful greenness in the midst of the grey rocks; and the odour of the bean-blossoms that was wafted to us had a tender sweetness and suggestiveness of home about it. Far up the distant slopes straggling clumps of brushwood were putting forth their first fresh leaves, the sole relics of the dense woods that once grew here, on account of which La Gaude got its name, and a herd of cattle was trying to pick up a scanty subsistence among them; the tinkling of their bells as they moved along producing a music redolent of the Alpine pastures, infinitely mellow and plaintive in that pure upland air. Winding in a series of zig-zags up

the steep sides of the rock, finding small but perfect ammonite shells embedded in the large blocks of stone which formed steps for our feet, we reached the top in about an hour after setting out.

How altogether different was the aspect of things from what we could have expected from below! We found a wide upland country, undulating away in a series of long slopes and rounded hills to the horizon, and presenting a brown barren appearance, softened with sunshine and shadow, exactly like that of a Scottish moor. Not a tree nor a shrub was visible. I could have fancied myself suddenly transported to the west of Perthshire; and the illusion was completed by the distant call of the cuckoo, that seemed to come unchanged from the far-off world of childhood. It was the first and last time I heard the magic voice in the Riviera. I had seen the earliest swallows wheeling in the morning air at Nice a month previously; and both these birds were on their way to gladden the northern summer and awaken the primrose in the wood and the cowslip on the river bank. The eastern part of the wide plateau at the top, shaded by upstanding rocks, is covered with short, smooth turf, over which it is exceedingly pleasant to walk. But as you advance westward to the edge of the rock immediately over the village, the nature of the ground changes. The rock comes everywhere to the surface, and is broken up in the most extraordinary way. It is honeycombed with projecting edges and sunken hollows exceedingly sharp and ragged. We have here a revelation of the true nature and origin of the cliff. Either the rock has been weathered into the shapes characteristic of its formation, or the top of the coral reef has been left all these ages very much as it was when it was upheaved into the air, and, the sea retiring, left it an inland height. It is exactly what we should imagine the top of an old coral reef to be. I have never seen anything like it elsewhere.

We had the greatest difficulty in making our way over this ridge. The utmost precaution was needed, for a single false step would result in a sprained ankle or a broken leg. The sharp holes in the rocks were often hidden by low clumps of brushwood and soft shrubby vegetation. Dwarf myrtles with their glossy foliage concealed the asperities of the surface; and dense cushions of the little woody Euphorbia (*Euphorbia spinosa*), whose dry spiny stems of the preceding year project among the young pale green leaves of the present, afforded here and there a grateful resting-place for the uncertain foot. Plants, whose blossoming was long past on the low ground, at this altitude flowered anew, and turned again the floral time-glass whose sands had run down. Globularias made patches of blue sky among the stones; crimson orchids glowed wherever a portion of spongy soil accumulated; and snow-white saxifrages spoke of cooler breezes and severer skies. The spiny smilax or wild sarsaparilla entwined its creeping thorny stems over the tufts of rosemary and thyme, and mingled its heart-shaped rigid leaves and clusters of scarlet berries with their fragrant foliage and purple blossoms. Dark pink patches of a calcareous

lichen bespattered the smooth rocks, as if flasks of wine had been spilt there by some bacchanalian party; and many of the hollows in the rocks were filled with the beautifully scolloped sulphur-coloured fringes and curves of the endive-leaved cup-moss, one of the rarest of our lichens, but one of the commonest ornaments of the upland woods and rocks of the Riviera. Thus the productions of the pole and the equator grow side by side on this plateau. The saxifrage of Greenland and the Euphorbia of Africa extract nourishment from the same soil, and arrest the eye by their startling contrasts. The absence of rain gives to the northern flowers a weary look, and the saxifrages seem as if they missed something. The snow about which they usually grow was afar off on the Alpine summits, and here they had only a distant Pisgah-view of it. Much of the charm of such elevated situations belongs to simple things; and flowers and weeds that would not elsewhere be noticed are here greeted with deep interest, and they seem to have a conscious independent life of their own, and exhibit the patient triumph of life over many difficulties, the scorching sun and the biting air at night, and the keen winds that blow down from the Alpine snows—and above all, the universal consuming drought which only the evening dews partially mitigate. They participate, too, in the grandeur of their circumstances; and their lowliness is redeemed by the glory of the wide heavens and the everlasting hills that seems to have passed into their frail lives, and made them conscious of a beauty higher than their own.

Cautiously approaching the edge of the mighty precipice we gazed down; but instead of finding it sheer as we had anticipated, it was broken into broad ledges like so many steps and stairs. A hundred feet or so below the summit there was a broad platform carpeted with a thin layer of soil, on which a few bushes of lentiscus and arbutus managed to live. Twining round them with its slender leafy stems were clusters of *Convolvulus althæoides*, covered with large campanulate blossoms of the most brilliant crimson; and clinging to the hottest and driest crevices clumps of shrubby Helianthemums, lovers of intensest sunlight, displayed myriads of soft yellow flowers. The presence of these shrubs and blossoms on the platform took away from the giddiness of looking over, and gave a feeling of confidence to the brain. The view, though grand and extensive, was not what we had expected from such a bold and outstanding pinnacle. To the back the scene was a series of low rounded hills and valleys, dimpling away to the horizon without any special feature or character. In front was one vast expanse of olive-woods, sloping down to the sea, with ravines indicated by darker lines, and swelling acclivities brightening in the sun with varied vegetation. Nice is hid by the folds of the low hills, and the ranges beyond looked tame. The only features that redeem the monotony of the landscape are the far-off peaks of purest white, and in the opposite direction the deep-blue waters of the Mediterranean blending with the heavens on the distant horizon.

After waiting on the summit a short time we descended by the same path by which we had climbed up. We then drove along a romantic road for about five miles to the interesting old town of Vence. On the way we descended into a deep ravine, through which flowed a considerable mountain stream called the Cagne. It was crossed by a most picturesque bridge, with a rustic mill beside it, and some of the finest elements of scenery around. On one side rose up the vertical wall of the rock of St. Jeannet; on the other the equally lofty and precipitous wall of the Rocher Noir, in whose side, near the top, there is an immense cave, called the Rion, containing a large basin of water, from which descends in one white line of foam a copious torrent with great force, falling into the Cagne at the bridge. The view up the gorge between the two lofty rocks is singularly wild and grand—the bed of the stream being formed of great boulders, over and among which the waters rush in many a foaming waterfall and swirling pool, filling all the air with a merry music, and in this land of drought producing a keen sensation of pleasure. Below the bridge the ravine expands into a wider valley, with richly wooded slopes on both sides, in some places terminating in sheer rocky precipices. This wild region was the scene of the exploits of the Robin Hood of Provence, Gaspard de Besse, who robbed travellers and tradesmen on their way from the Esterels to the fairs of Grasse and Nice, and who was at last seized and executed at Aix. Near Vence the fields by the roadside were exceedingly fertile, and the olive-trees old and magnificent. The air was heavy with the fragrance of the large double Parma violets, which are extensively cultivated here, and sold to the perfume makers of Grasse. We saw several women busy gathering them for this purpose as we passed by. The ascent to Vence, which occupies the summit of a hill about eleven hundred feet above the level of the sea, is very charming. The foliage is so rich and varied, the grass so green and the water so abundant, that it seemed like an English paradise in early summer after the insufferably bare and arid rocks among which we had been wandering.

None who see Vence even from a distance can fail to be struck with its imposing aspect, as it lies stretched on its long hilly ridge, surrounded by mountain slopes covered with olive-trees, and studded with villas and clusters of houses, and dominated by the mighty cliff of the Roche-Blanche, which rises at a little distance above it, as the rock of St. Jeannet towers above its village. But within the walls of the town there is much to attract the student of ancient history. Who first marked out this storied spot for human habitation we cannot tell. We know from Ptolemy that it was at a very early period the capital of a primitive Ligurian tribe called the Nerusii. They had a series of forts, which are still standing, and called by the people *castelluras*, built in a very massive manner of huge blocks of stone without cement, crowning the tops of the high rocks and hills in the neighbourhood; and to these they fled for refuge when hard pressed by the Roman legions. But by-and-by the town was conquered by the Romans, and under the name of *Ventium*

Horreum Cæsaris, or Civitas Venticulum, speedily attained to great importance as a central commissariat depôt for victualling the army. It was one of the eight principal cities of the province of the Maritime Alps, and possessed a forum, an aqueduct carrying to it the delicious water of the Lubiana, two temples dedicated to Mars and to Cybele, and many splendid palaces; and, in consequence, included among its inhabitants many persons of high rank, besides a large body of priests and magistrates. At the beginning of the Christian era it was connected by a splendid road, a branch of the old Via Julia Augusta, with Cimiez, Vado, and the southern Italian routes, along which an extensive traffic was carried. Fragments of this road have been found in different places between Vence and Cimiez, consisting of large slabs of pavement with layers of masonry on either side, and ruined tombs, which, according to the custom of the Romans, lined both sides of the public ways, and called the attention of the passer-by with their "siste, viator." Vence has still about it a sense of the presence of eternal Rome, whose sons found in this place a second Italy; for the chancel of the cathedral of Notre Dame, in the centre of the town, was formerly a Roman Temple, of which two columns survive; and numerous Roman inscriptions on stones built into the walls of a courtyard near the Hôtel de Ville remind the visitor of the ancient Ventium. Indeed, the ghost of the dead Empire seems to be more real in this place than the flesh and blood of the present *régime*.

The ecclesiastical history of Vence is exceedingly interesting. In this respect it transcends all the other towns of Provence, owing to its more sheltered position having preserved it from the ravages of barbarians, who frequently laid waste other districts. It is said that Christianity was first introduced here by St Trophimus, in the latter half of the second century. The town has had a continuous succession of bishops since the fourth century. One of the greatest of these was St. Lambert, whose name is still venerated in Vence, and whose tomb, with a Latin inscription, preserved in the cathedral, was supposed to have worked miracles up to the time of the French Revolution. He lived in apostolic simplicity among the people, and his goodness became a proverb. A better-known bishop of Vence was Godeau, who ruled here in 1644. He was one of the founders of the French Academy, a voluminous and much-prized writer, and the leader of the wits connected with the famous Hôtel Rambouillet. Another bishop of a different type, Surian, raised himself from being a shepherd-boy to this see, and was so celebrated for his eloquence that he was called the second Massillon. At the time of the Reformation most of the inhabitants of Vence were Protestants, in memory of whom one of its streets is still called Rue des Huguenots. The great commander of the Huguenot forces, Lesdiguières, who was supposed to be invincible, during the wars of the League besieged Vence, which had declared for the Duke of Savoy, but was repulsed with great loss; a circumstance which the Catholic party attributed to the direct

Photo, Giletta, Nice.

Vence.

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miraculous intervention of St. Veran and St. Lambert, whose aid was invoked on the occasion. The bishopric of Vence has been allowed to fall into abeyance. Its cathedral has a splendid choir of dark carved oak containing fifty stalls, and a beautiful old baptismal font. The lords of Vence are buried in the vault under the nave, and the bishops, from the time of the foundation of the bishopric in 374; in the vaults under the chancel.

No less interesting is its civil history, when it was under the rule of the lords of Vence, whose ancient palace is at the northern entrance of the town, with a massive square tower built in the fifteenth century in the style of the palaces of Florence, and a huge old ash-tree, sadly mutilated, overshadowing it, imparting to it a still gloomier aspect. Large portions of the old walls and ramparts, with massive square towers of the eleventh century next the gates, still remain, and testify to its former strength and importance. The Knights Templars, too, invest the place with the romance of the Middle Ages, for the ruins of one of their castles may be seen perched half-way up the mighty precipice of the Roche-Blanche, in the midst of beds of rosemary and bushes of prickly broom, whose golden blossoms shed a perpetual halo around it. This ruined castle of St. Martin-les-Vence was the home of Hugonin de Capitou, Lord of Mandelieu, and the commander of the Templars in Provence, who was executed, with all the other knights, by Philippe le Bel in 1308. Vence is now, however, more a snail-shell than a beehive. Its streets are wonderfully quiet; and the houses look as if they were too big for the inhabitants, who stand in the doorways and gaze after the tourist as if the visit of a stranger were a rare event. Very picturesque lanes, overarched like those of Bordighera and San Remo, keep a grateful twilight in the glowing noon, and run in and out from the one long central street with its queer little shops and tall houses. Its old historic name is all the grandeur that now clings to the town. But yet, in spite of its shrunken and withered look, there is a wonderful charm about it. Its decay is the long autumn of a very ancient civilisation; and we who were barbarians, living in wattled huts, during the height of its renown, cannot but feel a profound respect for it. The little incidents of to-day sink into insignificance beside the memories of the past that overpower us here.

Vence is a convenient centre for exploring the grand and varied scenery in the neighbourhood. To the west there is the beautiful Corniche Road leading from Vence to Grasse, commanding most charming views of the sea at every turn, while the inland scenery which it opens up on the banks of the Loup, with its rocky gorges and waterfalls, and quaint mountain villages of Gourdon and Touretta, is exceedingly wild and romantic. A lofty rampart of calcareous cliffs overhangs all the way eastwards. The country at their foot is rich in all kinds of cultivated beauty; and the combination of rushing water and lovely foliage, towering crags and barren hillsides makes an excursion along this route an ever-memorable one. To

the south at a distance of about four miles is the most interesting old town of St. Paul du Var, where an artist could revel for weeks among the numerous relics of the past in the shape of massive fortifications, quaint doorways, windows with Gothic shafts and mullions, and richly decorated mantel-pieces. Up the valley of the Var the views are wonderfully grand. No less than eight villages may be seen perched on various points of vantage on either side of the valley. One of the most picturesque of these hill villages is Le Broc, on the west side of the Var, surrounded by mountains of all shades of rich colouring, with the snowy Alps towering over all.

In one of the quaintest of the auberges in the principal square of Vence, near the great historic tower and ash-tree, we found our friends, who had come by a different route, and were trysted to meet us here. They had made good use of their waiting-time, for they had spread out for us a bountiful feast, which thirst and hunger and the fatigues of a day of much enjoyment made exceedingly welcome. Before starting home, we paid a visit to the kitchen to see the grandmother of the establishment, who was ninety-four years of age. Her face was one network of brown wrinkles, and her figure was bent and withered; but there was a keen look in the still dark eye, and a firm grip in the hand as she grasped ours, which showed that the fire of life had not yet spent itself. In the twilight atmosphere that was about her, she seemed no unmeet personification of the spirit of the town itself. They were in thorough harmony with each other; and both have gone on living from the sheer force of habit, and have sunk into final decrepitude and decay together.

The drive home at night was peculiarly enjoyable. There was no moon, and yet a dim light pervaded the horizon, against which dusky olive-trees and motionless pine-woods looked vaguely large and mysterious. The dry white road glimmered before us through the gloom, like a track of moonlight cast upon the waters. It helped to light us on better than our carriage lamps, which seemed to radiate darkness rather than light. What a soft coolness fell upon us out of heaven after the hot dusty day! There was no dew; the air felt so dry, and fanned our face like the wafture of some downy wing. Dusky shapes flitted past us like embodied shadows, and strange wild cries now and then startled the stillness of the slumbering night. The plaintive cry of the little cue owl sounded at times, and seemed the very soul of loneliness. Descending into picturesque valleys with steep, richly wooded sides, the darkness deepened, and the ghostly illumination of the road became feebler, obscured by the shadows of overarching trees. In these lower grounds, where dews were distilled and moisture was stored up, the noise of the frogs was perfectly astounding. It seemed incredible that such sounds could have been produced by creatures so small—which made up in multitudes for their individual insignificance. The chorus, however, gave an air of cheerfulness to the deep gloom of the woods, but it dispelled the mystery and romance of the night. On a height overhanging

the road the lights of the village of St. Paul glimmered through the trees, and at a little distance beyond, a spark or two of human life showed us where the smaller village of La Colle, the birthplace of Eugène Sue, hid itself in the shadows of the woods. But these human tapers, suggestive as they were of the warmth and pathos of human life, did not interest us nearly so much as the tiny lamps which the glow-worm kindled here and there on the wayside walls. Larger and more brilliant than those at home, they each showed a small planet of indescribably soft greenish light among the tufts of moss, and illumined a wide space around them. Thoughts of elfins and fairies, and all the phantasmagoria of the credulous world of childhood, came back to us with something of the old thrilling sweetness, and we felt for a moment young again.

Human habitations now became more numerous and frequent; and high against the sky-line on the left loomed the serrated outline of the old town of Cagnes, with its massive castle of the Grimaldi crowning the highest point, and the ruins of the hoary church of St. Véran giving a sanctity to the mean houses crowding the slopes around it. We passed through the low or modern town, and as we came near the railway station of the Var we saw what formed the climax to the enjoyment of the day—the first fire-flies of the season. They always appear in this neighbourhood a week or a fortnight earlier than at Nice or Cannes. It was a most exciting thing to watch their airy motions among the thick plantations on either side of the road. Suddenly a flash appeared, like a minute rocket, lighting up vividly the fresh young foliage; then in a series of pulsations it passed up through the cloud of leaves, with intervals of darkness and spaces accentuated by fire. The motion was not continuous, like the ascent of sparks from a chimney, but jerky and spasmodic. As we advanced, the green masses of filmy April foliage burst into atoms of lambent fire around us, and in an instant they were quenched. Suddenly, a little farther on, they appeared in every direction among the bushes, now rising, now falling, vanishing here, re-appearing there, converging into a central increased flame, and dispersing in brilliant spangles. It was a vision of the tropics, a glimpse of the "Better Land" of one's youthful dreams, "where the fire-flies glance through the myrtle boughs." A few weeks later on, and every garden and orange-grove about Nice would be illumined night after night with the brilliant scintillations. Recrossing the viaduct of the Var, we soon entered into the din and crowd of the long Rue de France, with its dark suburban shops and rustic cabarets, and exchanged with a sigh the beautiful silence and solitude of nature for the noisy human hive of Nice.

V.

NICE.

IF Cannes is the creation of Lord Brougham, Nice may be said to be the discovery of Smollett. When the author of "Humphrey Clinker" arrived, in November, 1763, at the sombre, uninviting collection of alleys clustered together at the foot of the château called the old town of Nice, he found there no English colony and no English comforts. There was no annual migration of invalids and convalescents from all parts of the world; and only a few foreigners were sufficiently adventurous and original in their taste to make it a place of residence. Smollett remained in Nice for a year and a-half almost continuously, making it his headquarters for excursions to various places in the neighbourhood. And he has written about it in his "Travels" with a fulness of information and a trenchant common sense somewhat rare in such books. The old Nice, as it existed a century ago, rises before us from his pages, with its picturesque somnolence and its homely life varied by numerous *festa* days, when the upper classes mingled in a free and easy way with the peasants, and were made happy by very trivial things. In recognition of the service which the great humorist has done to the town in bringing it into notice, the municipality has called one of the streets branching off from the left bank of the river, on the old-fashioned side, after his name. The "Rue Smolet," incorrectly spelt, as we should have expected from a people given to orthographical mistakes, commemorates what M. Emile Négrin, in his remarkable guide-book, calls "un écrivain Anglais, qui a publié sur Nice des lettres assez acerbes." But the acerbity has turned to sweetness in the experience of the Niçois, and for the sake of the good that has come out of the evil, they have thus monumentally forgiven their severe critic.

Like Athens, which grew into a historic city from the primitive hill-fort on the Acropolis, Nice can trace its origin to the prehistoric settlement on the outstanding calcareous rock which is now called the Château. The Ligurian shepherds and herdsmen raised their rude huts on the summit of this rock, which is a part of the long ridge of Cimiez, and fenced themselves in with a strong palisade. Commanding

Photo, Giletta, Nice.

The Promenade of the Château, Nice.

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a magnificent outlook of the whole country round about, the Greek navigators became familiar with it as a landmark, and in course of time a small Ionic colony established itself, at the foot of the rock, where the little cove, now called Ponchettes, deeper then than now, afforded a natural shelter. The position was not secured without a struggle with the native possessors of the soil, in which the Greeks were the conquerors; and in memory of their victory, obtained three hundred and fifty years before Christ, they called their infant city Nicæa, or Nike. The Ligurians were driven from their rocky fastness, and left to their Greek successors the platform on the top, to be to them, like the Acropolis of their beloved Athens, a citadel and a place of refuge. But however long they occupied it, they did not succeed in obliterating all traces of the former occupiers. Recently the ruins of tombs and of prehistoric buildings, along with stone implements and the massive vaulting of an underground edifice, have been discovered. Unmistakable relics also of the Greek occupation have been found on the spot; and it is supposed that the temple of Diana, which was invariably placed by the Phocœans near the port in any of their settlements, stood on the site of the present cathedral, whose substructures are of very ancient masonry, and exhibit the same orientation and rectangular shape peculiar to pagan temples.

After a time the Romans conquered the place, but they allowed the Greek colony, which consisted principally of sailors and of people engaged in trade, to inhabit their mean homes under the shadow of the castle hill, and to enjoy a kind of half independence in their seafaring pursuits, while they established themselves on the neighbouring inland height of Cimiez, from whence they governed the surrounding country. Hence the Roman remains at Nice are few and unimportant, consisting of three sarcophagi of the fifth century, the remains of a small temple on the summit of the rock, and a few buildings clustered around it. In the Middle Ages the Hill of the Château was strongly fortified. The castle which crowned the highest point was at various periods destroyed and rebuilt, and was finally razed to the ground by the Duke of Berwick, general of Louis XIV., in 1706, only one round tower, called the Tour de Bellande, remaining. I may mention that this tower is so called on account of the miracle which took place there, in which St. Honorat saved the innocent Gualbore de Bellande under the ordeal of fire, as recorded in a very curious and popular Provençal poem written by a monk of Lérins in the thirteenth century. Of late the hill has been converted into a public promenade, with beautiful winding walks and carriage roads, shaded with pines and cypresses and all manner of umbrageous trees. There is a romantic public cemetery near the top; and the panorama of Nice, and the extensive amphitheatre around it, covered with villas and gardens and olive-woods, ascending to the bare heights of Mont Chauve, bounded in the far distance by the snow-clad peaks of the Col de Tenda range, is one of the finest views in the south of Europe. The point of the public road where the

southern slope of the hill descends precipitously into the sea is called the *Rauba-Capeau*, for a sudden gust of wind often lies in wait there to deprive the unwary passer-by of his hat.

This hill of Nice combines a wonderful variety of interests. To the geologist, the dolomite, or coral reef, of which it is composed has yielded in its fissures and caverns the bones of elephants, rhinoceroses, hippopotamuses, and other extinct quadrupeds, along with several marine shells and the remains of fresh-water turtle, presenting some puzzling problems. To the student of history, the plateau on the top is a palimpsest of different eras and civilisations, the one superimposed upon, but not obliterating, the other—the Ligurian oppidum, the Phœnician settlement, the Greek acropolis, the Roman castrum, and the fortress of the Middle Ages; and the vista that one obtains here into the history of the past is as extensive and far-reaching as the physical view which the situation commands. While to the lover of the picturesque in nature and art, and even to the most delicate invalid, the shady walks and quiet contemplative nooks, and the splendid outlook of sea and town and Alpine range, afford a continual feast of enjoyment..

About the end of last century, when strangers and invalids came in large and increasing numbers from other countries to the place, the old town, with its narrow, ill-smelling streets creeping half-way up the castle-hill, and hemmed in by walls, proved a very unsuitable residence. The Duke of York spent part of the winter of 1764, and his brother, the Duke of Gloucester, a few years later, spent a few months, in a villa on the other side of the Paglione, in a quarter which derives its name of Croix de Marbre from a marble cross erected a hundred years previously to commemorate the visit of Pope Paul III. The presence of these royal dukes attracted a considerable number of English visitors, who began to build houses and villas in the neighbourhood, and made the place fashionable. Originally the ground was waste and marshy, and within the last thirty years large spaces were covered with pools of water filled with weeds and water-plants. After this a powerful impulse was given to the development of the town, another bridge was erected over the Paglione, and new streets and large hotels sprang up as if by magic. Nice has now a population of 90,000, while its port is the third in commercial importance on the northern shores of the Mediterranean. It has all the attractions and resources of a luxurious capital, while its carnival is the finest in Europe. A large number of the shop-windows are filled with luscious preserved fruits and candied sweets, with beautiful masses of flowers, and with a great variety of ornamental articles of olive-wood mosaic, with the favourite device of a swallow on the wing, and the motto, "Je reviendrai" inscribed upon them—three of the principal commodities of Nice. Nearly all the streets command charming views of the surrounding hills, and the bare rugged head of Mont Chauve, with all the suggestiveness of wild nature, looks down upon the visitor when mingling with the gaily-dressed crowd, and regarding

Photo, Giletta, Nice.

Promenade des Anglais, Nice.

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with a side glance the treasures of shop-windows as attractive as those of Paris. The Paglione, which is a characteristic mountain torrent descending from the snows of the Col de Tenda, cleaves the city in twain, and opens up along its wide stony bed a splendid vista of the receding heights. The surrounding amphitheatre of bare calcareous hills reflects the heat, and the mirror of the Mediterranean the light, of the sun; and thus the direct and reflected sunshine floods all the streets and houses with a glow of warmth and radiance which makes a perpetual summer in the place.

On a hot day there is not a more delightful lounge anywhere than in the Public Garden, which occupies a triangular space of ground between the mouth of the Paglione and the Promenade des Anglais. The extent of the place is only a few acres, but it has been laid out so cunningly that it seems quite a wilderness of verdure. The visitor sees here at every step some unfamiliar form of vegetation. The singular trees of Australia, Central America, Northern and Southern Africa, China and Japan, mingle with the beautiful species which belong to the Riviera, all growing with a vigour and luxuriance which could scarcely be surpassed in their native land. Fine evergreens, such as the magnolia, the cypress, the strawberry-tree, the acacia, the Japanese medlar, and the Schinus molle, or pepper-tree, mingle their varied tints with rich effect, and are lighted up by the snowy bridal blossoms of the sparmannia and the pittosporum, and made fragrant with masses of purple heliotrope and crimson roses; while the splash of the fountain, whose descending spray nourishes deep green cushions of moss on the stone-girt basin, has a soothing and refreshing sound. The palms of this garden are not only remarkable for their size, but also for the abundance of their fruit. Opening out from the Public Garden is the Promenade des Anglais—one of the finest esplanades in Europe—with magnificent hotels and private villas, embosomed in semi-tropical greenery on one side, and on the other the blue water of the Mediterranean flashing in the sun. Close to the Public Garden is the Pier Casino, which is a very picturesque group of buildings erected over the sea, containing a large and tastefully decorated concert and ball-room, a bazaar, and refreshment saloons. The arid whiteness of the Promenade is relieved by a long line of palms, graceful feathery tamarisks, oleanders, glossy-leaved pittosporums, and other foreign trees. The beach is covered with white shingle, with which the foam-tipped billows make a raking sound as they retreat from and advance to the same line on the shore; and overhead innumerable sea-gulls, rare elsewhere in the Riviera—attracted, it must be owned, by the sewage which is here discharged into the sea—skim the air; while crowds of gaily-dressed visitors sitting on the beach, or walking slowly along the promenade, under the shade of many-coloured umbrellas, add to the animation of the bright scene.

In the town the most interesting places are the quays on either side of the river where there are numerous very attractive shops. The Quai de Massena, so called after the great French Marshal, has a row of splendid palm-trees extending all the

way to the Public Garden; and in one corner an enormous Eucalyptus tree, whose trunk, the almost fabulous growth of twenty-six years, takes the outstretched arms of two persons to embrace. Not far from this the bed of the river, crossed by several bridges, may be seen. It is an unsightly spectacle, dry and sun-bleached, with here and there a damp spot, around which scores of washerwomen are laboriously trying to wet and cleanse their dirty clothes, the rest of the channel being utilised for the drying of various garments spread out on the hot stones. Standing on arches over the river is the Municipal Casino, which has a winter garden and a theatre, and is a very pleasant lounge. The principal street in Nice is the Avenue de la Gare, nearly a mile in length, which intersects the city in a straight line from north to south, leading from the river to the railway station. It contains most of the principal shops and hotels. It is a beautiful boulevard, shaded by elegant, umbrageous plane-trees, whose light green foliage affords in spring a delicious shelter from the scorching glare of the sun reflected from the white street. In winter, however, the trees are leafless and somewhat unsightly, and the yellow fluff contained in the nut-like fruit, when dispersed and floating at this season in the air, is said to be injurious to patients afflicted with throat disease, and, indeed, the cause of much suffering. At the upper end the plane trees are agreeably diversified with well-grown Grevillias and Eucalyptuses, which have the advantage of being evergreen. At the lower end, where the street opens into the pleasant square called Place Massena, there are on both sides handsome arcades, within whose shade the visitors and the inhabitants sit in front of the cafés, and regale themselves at tables covered with their favourite beverages, in the Parisian fashion. The Avenue de la Gare leads to a part of Nice called Carabacel, placed at the foot of the ridge on which Cimiez is situated, which is said to be drier and less exposed to sudden vicissitudes of temperature than the city proper. New boulevards and streets have, therefore, been formed in this direction, and the district has all the social advantages of Nice itself, while it enjoys a milder and more sheltered situation. Everywhere in the streets may be seen hanging out to dry long curly strips of the aromatic rind of the little orange. They are destined to make marmalade and flavour puddings—and form the principal ingredients in curacoa. The word *zest*, it is suggested meant originally a little slice of this orange peel; though now it is used by the French to signify anything worthless.

The cemeteries of Nice are very interesting. One of the most charming is that already alluded to on the plateau of the Château Hill. In this quiet home of the dead—for very quiet and lonely it is, though in the very centre of a large city, above which it is lifted by its rock into the kindred peace of the sky—surrounded by the dust of their friends and relations, sleep the celebrated Leon Gambetta, and the mother of Garibaldi. Near the gate is the granite pyramid erected to the memory of the numerous persons who perished in the burning of the Italian Opera in 1881,

Photo. Giletta. Nice.

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View westward to Nice.

and who are buried beside it. The marble crosses and monuments gleam white amid the dark shadows of cypresses, olives, and pine-trees; and from the highest point a wonderful outlook is obtained of the extensive amphitheatre of Nice and its glorious cincture of snow-clad Alps, surely a most suggestive opening out of the narrow horizon of death in this solitary God's Acre. Another touching memorial of the dead is the Russian Chapel to the north-west of the railway station, just outside the city, which marks the site of the Villa Bermond, in which the Prince Imperial of Russia died in April 24, 1865. It stands in a beautiful orange-grove, and the interior is elegantly decorated in the Byzantine style, in blue and gold, with rich mosaics and white marble panelling enclosing frescoes of saints in niches. The young prince, who was prematurely wise and devout, had a presentiment of his death long before he had any symptoms of disease, and is reported to have said then "I should wish to live, and everything smiles upon me, but I feel that my happiness will not be here." To the west of Nice, a mile beyond the suburbs, is the lovely English cemetery—fast filling up, alas!—which lies open to the sun continually, and has the blue waves of the Mediterranean always murmuring a sad requiem at its foot, while the roses bloom ceaselessly among the tombs from January to December, and the trees and flowers of southern climes, that make the darkness of death itself beautiful, forget to fade. Many a fond heart in distant lands turns with deep yearning to this spot as the centre of its affections.

The first Protestant churchyard in Nice is that which lies around the Episcopal church of the Trinity; but it is now closed, and no new interments are allowed in it. Although situated in the very midst of the throng of life and business, I know few spots more quiet than the churchyard beside it. Shut in by high walls from the noise and bustle of the street outside, it enjoys a kind of monastic seclusion. Tall cypresses cast their dark shadows down upon the enclosure, and beautiful trees and shrubs, unknown in our country, make the place a perfect bower of foliage, most refreshing to the eye, and affording a grateful shade in the dazzling sunshine. I often turned aside when passing by, not only like Hervey, to meditate among the tombs, but to seek coolness and refreshment from the pitiless glare of the noonday sun; and I look back upon these visits as among the sweetest of my memories of Nice. The place is crowded with tombs and monuments, all in white marble, many of which are from forty to fifty years old, but yet are so pure and uninjured—without fleck of lichen or moss or weather-stain—as though they had been erected only yesterday. The glorious climate, like that of Egypt, embalms in immaculate purity all that is intrusted to it. The graves are nearly all those of persons who lived in good and even high positions in society, who came to this sunny land in search of the health they could not find in their own. Many were in the last stage of consumption when they sought these bluer skies and milder airs as a forlorn hope; and they died far away from home and friends in the midst of strangers. They are here laid in foreign

soil with no kindred dust around them. There is much that is most touching in the associations and suggestions of such a place; and many of the inscriptions upon the tombs record some old sorrow that has long been healed by the same hand that caused it.

It is not easy among the multitude of tombs to find the special one we are in search of. The grave of Lyte is almost in the centre, nearer to the church than to the gate, and you have to step over many a marble tablet and brush aside many a luxuriant flowery bush ere you reach it. There is nothing to distinguish it from the other graves that crowd around it. Like the man himself, who, while he lived, was of the most modest and retiring disposition, his tomb, as it were, hides itself from notice among the other more pretentious tombs on either side; and owing to this circumstance chiefly, comparatively few of the visitors to Nice are aware that such precious dust reposes here. A broad flat slab of white marble, on which time has left no trace of its flight, covers the grave, with the name, date of birth and death, and place of residence of the sleeper below, carved in somewhat indistinct letters upon it. At the head is a large marble cross, with a white banksia rose wreathing it with its myriads of small fragrant blossoms—a fit tribute to one whose highest ambition while he was able, was to preach the cross of Christ, and who meekly followed the Master to the end, bearing the cross of suffering, and triumphing in it over death and the grave. By this simple monument the visitor is touchingly reminded of Lyte's own words in the last stanza of his hymn, "Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes."

There is nothing on the tombstone to indicate that the author of "Abide with me" lies below. This surely is an unaccountable omission. How appropriate it would have been, while mentioning the fact of his authorship, to engrave a stanza from the hymn upon the tomb, or to quote a few verses from another poem of the author, which is almost equally beautiful, though very little known. It is entitled "Declining Days," and was written when the sands in the glass of life were running very low.

"I want not vulgar fame—
I seek not to survive in wood or stone;
Hearts may not kindle when they hear my name,
Nor tears my value own.

"But might I leave behind
Some blessing for my fellows, some fair trust
To guide, to cheer, to elevate my kind
When I was in the dust;

"Might verse of mine inspire
One virtuous aim, one high resolve impart;
Light in one drooping soul a hallowed fire,
Or bind one broken heart;

Photo, Giletta, Nice.

The Port of Nice.

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"Death would be sweeter then,
More calm my slumber 'neath the silent sod,
Might I thus live to bless my fellow-men,
Or glorify my God.

"O Thou! whose touch can lend
Life to the dead, Thy quickening grace supply,
And grant me, swan-like, my last breath to spend
In song that may not die!"

Standing by his grave, and recalling these beautiful lines, it was an interesting thought how completely their prayer was fulfilled. "Abide with me" was the last poem which he composed. It was indeed the swan-song in which he poured out his latest breath. It was the climax and supreme effort of his genius. The spirit of inspiration came to him in answer to his prayer at Berryhead, the scene of his long ministry on the south coast of England, when his life was fading with the fading leaves of September, and he was about to set out on that last forlorn journey to the Continent from which he was never to return. And that swan-song, expressing as it does the deepest longings and hopes of human hearts, has sounded throughout all the Christian world, and will keep the memory of the author green as long as the Church endures. No other hymn is sung more frequently or more heartily at the family altar, or in the public worship of the sanctuary. It is most suitable to the condition of pilgrims and strangers like us, who have to undergo the pain of constant changes and partings.

At Nice, Mr. Lyte spent his last days in the Hôtel de Grand Bretagne. There, while life was ebbing slowly away, he would look out from the window facing the Public Garden upon the blue waters of the Mediterranean Sea, just seen through the palm-trees flashing in the cloudless sunshine, symbolizing to him, doubtless, the sea of glass before the throne upon which his feet were so soon to tread, and the palm-branch of victory that the Conqueror would place in his hand. I often, in passing by, looked up at the window of the room where he lay, and tried to picture to myself the saintly man in these last sad days lying on his pillow, while "earth's vain shadows" were fleeing away, and "heaven's morning" was breaking upon his soul; so patient, so humble, so full of gratitude for every little service, and noting, with the old love of nature which clung to him to the last, the beauties of sunrise and sunset spread over the southern sea and sky—beauties heightened to him by the near prospect of the coming darkness that would hide them for ever from his view. The solemn association seemed to make all the place round about holy ground. There was no resident clergyman of the Church of England in Nice at the time. Canon Childers, for many years the highly-respected incumbent, did not begin his work till some time after. But there happened to be staying at the place on a winter holiday, a young brother clergyman of ardent evangelical zeal, the Rev. Edward Manning, subsequently cardinal of Rome, but then rector of the English church of Lavington, in Sussex,

and Archdeacon of Chichester. From his hands Mr. Lyte received for the last time the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. All after this was a blessed peace. The physical fear of dying, to which Mr. Lyte had been in bondage all his life, passed away completely. And when the Master came and called for him he calmly arose and followed Him. Without a sigh or a struggle he literally fell asleep on Saturday, 20th November, 1847. Of this poet it can be most truly said that "he learned in suffering what he taught in song." His words came from his own heart, and they go straight to ours; and we deeply feel, while singing his deathless hymn, that

> "The prayer of those who suffer
> Has the strength of love and death."

In this connection I may mention that Halévy, the well-known composer of operatic music, died in Nice in 1862.

The most attractive spot about Nice is undoubtedly Cimiez. This gently-sloping hill, about four hundred feet about the level of the sea, has been a favourite residence since the Roman Emperor Gallienus sent his delicate wife, Salonina, there to recover her health. The air is softer and more soothing at this elevation than on the sea-shore, and those who cannot sleep in the exciting atmosphere of Nice may enjoy in the quietude and stillness here a grateful repose. Beautiful villas, enclosed each in its own little Eden of semi-tropical vegetation, crowd the hill; and numberless paths lead into lovely dells, bright with wild flowers, and through extensive olive-woods, and up shaded heights, commanding between the openings the most charming views of the scenery about Nice. The white dusty high-road from the city is itself made lovely by the glimpses which it gives on either side of paradises of cultivated beauty, and by means of the drooping yellow blossoms of the Buddlea and the red coral beads of the pepper-tree overhanging the walls. Owing to the annual visit for several years of the late Queen Victoria to this place, a great many new villas and hotels have been built, and the extensive grounds have been intersected with broad and easy walks. Cimiez is a very ancient place. Pliny tells us that it was originally an oppidum or walled city, inhabited by an Alpine tribe called the Vediantii. On the arx, or highest point of the terrace, rising up precipitously from the dry bed of the Paglione, and commanding a splendid outlook, may still be seen considerable remains of the walls of the prehistoric fortress, built of huge blocks of stone, after the manner of the Etruscan structures in Italy. The primitive Ligurians were displaced by the Romans, who built a Roman town called Cemenelum upon the site of the original oppidum, which became afterwards the capital of the whole region of the Maritime Alps, the seat of administration and the military headquarters. Cimiez took the part of Cæsar against the infatuated Antony and Cleopatra. Of late years the excavations of local antiquaries have brought to light the original foundations of the Roman city, the course of the aqueducts which supplied it with water, as well as

numerous Latin inscriptions recording the names of its governors and officers of the fortress, along with sepulchral stones, urns, lamps, statues, and mosaics, which enable us to form a pretty accurate idea of its importance in early days.

Above ground there are two characteristic relics of the Roman city still remaining, which perpetuate the memory of its former greatness. The first is the Baths, which may be seen in the garden of the villa of Count Garin, where, at a considerable depth below the surface, were discovered by excavation in 1875 the different parts of the structure—the hypocaust which supplied the heat, the chambers in which the bathers rested and amused themselves, and the hot and cold and vapour baths, whose pavements and casings of coloured tiles still remain, and are encumbered with fragments of sculpture and bas-reliefs. All around are strewn the broken bases and shafts of splendid lofty pillars; and the stylobates of green marble, and the cymatia of red marble with finely sculptured mouldings, show that these baths were not much inferior in point of architectural beauty and luxuriousness of furnishings to those of Rome itself. The whole place has a sad air of faded grandeur, while the huge cypresses around raise their dark plumes into the blue sky, and produce when the wind sighs among them a dirge grander and more mournful than any other natural sound. In the same ground is a square building, very much defaced and venerable-looking, which is supposed to be an ancient temple of Apollo.

Within a short distance is the other great relic of Roman days—the Amphitheatre, which is in a good state of preservation, and used to be called by the peasants the Tino delle Fade, or Bath of the Fairies. Before coming to it you pass a rude cow-house, where is shown a huge specimen of the *Cactus Hexagonus*, whose roots penetrate beneath the floor of the enclosure, and which as Canon Hole wittily remarks is indebted for its goodness to the cow. The theatre was seated for eight thousand spectators. The high-road is carried through it, an act of profanation altogether gratuitous, which jars upon the sensibilities, and prevents one from realising fully the sentiment of the place. The large elliptical space is surrounded by huge masses of buildings, somewhat roughly put together without any attempt at ornamentation. The broken seats rise up one above another in tiers of half ruinous masonry, on which the spectators arranged themselves to see the sports, from the magistrates and legionaries on the lowest, to the common people on the highest; while an awning was spread over the whole building to protect them from the hot sunshine. A few of the perforated corbels in which were inserted the poles which supported this awning may be observed on the outside of the walls. It was in this amphitheatre that the Prefect Claudius vainly endeavoured to save the life of St. Pons, by entreating him to offer sacrifice in the neighbouring temple of Apollo, already alluded to. Nature has spread a dusty carpet of green over the floor, which numberless slaves and captives, fighting with each other and with wild beasts for the amusement of the brutal populace, had dyed with their blood; and on the walls which rang with the plaudits of the spectators, white

and silent now in the glaring sunshine, tufts of gay wild flowers, and pale ferns and clumps of grass, have laid their soft touch on the crumbling stones, and striven to bring the tragic ruin into harmony of peace and beauty with the gentle scenes around. On the ruins an exquisite little flower belonging to the primrose tribe, the *Asterolium Stellatum* grows not infrequently. Under the microscope its leaves are frosted over with small stars. A little to the east of the amphitheatre there is a huge plateau covered with the ruins of the house of the Roman Proconsul, surrounded by stately ilexes and ancient olives. It was razed to the ground when Cimiez in the sixth century fell before the Lombards, who burned and sacked the houses, and put all the inhabitants to the sword.

In the neighbourhood of the amphitheatre, surrounded with the same old-world atmosphere, is the interesting Franciscan monastery of Cimiez, the monastery of the Recollets, whose time-stained walls acquire an additional sanctity from the shadows of a magnificent grove of ilex-trees, and the presence of a curious Gothic cross of white marble of the fifteenth century in the square in front. This cross, supported on a twisted marble shaft having a composite capital, represents in its rich sculpture the image of the crucified seraph which appeared in a dream to St. Francis of Assisi; while on the portico of the building is painted a fresco recording a dream of Pope Innocent III., who beheld St. Francis supporting the falling columns of the Lateran Church, and therefore granted his request for the institution of the Franciscan order. The collection of illuminated missals and MSS. of the Middle Ages contained in the sacristy of the Church, lined by frescoes by a Venetian artist, is extremely interesting and valuable. The vellum of the MSS., stiff to the touch, is rich with gilded illuminations in quaint caligraphy, while the brown leather bindings are decked with huge brass bosses and nails, and are kept together with massive brazen clasps. Several paintings by Ludovicus Brea, a fellow pupil of Raphael, and a native of Nice, adorn the walls of the church. The old-fashioned convent-garden, surrounded by the cloisters, is rich in flowers, especially white scented violets; and the adjoining cemetery is the favourite burying-ground of the higher classes of Nice, crowded with small marble chambers with tombs within, and with crosses and groups of sculpture of indifferent merit marking the graves in the open space. There is little that appeals to the higher sentiments in the decorations of the tombs; and the taste that has associated tawdry artificial flowers and meretricious crowns and crosses of glass-beads with the solemn memorials of the dead is extremely rude. An exception is the monument of of Ercole Trachet, erected by his sister, who is represented as weeping on his tomb. The only thing that redeems the spot from the desecration of human vanity is the magnificent view of the valley of the Paglione and the surrounding hills, which the lofty position of the cemetery commands. It is a well-known sketching-place of artists. The best time to visit Cimiez is on a Sunday afternoon, when the square in front of the church is gay with promenaders. Once a year in April, there is a

Photo, Giletta, Nice. *Monastery of Cimiez, Nice.*

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market held in this place, where gourds are principally sold. These gourds are used as drinking vessels, and are very popular for this purpose. The market in consequence has received the name of the *fête de congourdons.*

A favourite excursion from Nice is to the Grotto of St. André. The road to it, on the left bank of the Paglione, is relieved of its dusty monotony by the interesting associations that gather round the Monastery of St. Pons on the way—so called after the Roman senator, St. Pontius, who suffered martyrdom for the Christian faith in the amphitheatre of Cimiez. It is a large white barrack-like edifice, surrounded with walls and adorned with tall cypresses, dating from the time of Charlemagne, who spent some days there on his way to Rome. Beside it the inhabitants of Nice signed the famous treaty, in 1388, by which their city and territory were annexed to the House of Savoy. Where the stream of St. André joins the Paglione the scenery becomes picturesque. A narrow richly-wooded glen opens up, with the little village of St. André higher up the stream, and a ruined castle and charming parish church, with a picturesque campanile, crowning the hill above. The rocks draw closer together and ascend to a greater height, while the sound of the torrent rushing over its rough bed waxes louder. A side path, shaded by cypresses, leads to the grotto, which is a natural tunnel—lined with beautiful stalactites and luxuriant masses of maidenhair fern—made by the stream, here gathering into a deep black pool, over which the visitor is paddled in a shallow boat. A petrifying well is near at hand, which takes impressions of coins, birds' nests, and cones. Beyond this the glen becomes wild and savage, like some Alpine gorge. The bare limestone cliffs, scarred and riven in the most extraordinary manner, approach so closely that there is barely room for the road and the stream; while they rise so high overhead as to shut out the sun and create a dim cold shade which invalids must guard against in passing through. This gorge was once the haunt of bandits; and an old sinister-looking oil-mill, situated near an open cave in the precipitous limestone rocks, whose products discolour the waters of the stream, is associated with many a dark deed. A steep zig-zag road winds up the hill to the romantic village of Falicon, perched on the top of the rock overhanging the stream, commanding a most magnificent view; while the high road passes on between cliffs still higher and wilder, with hardly a trace of vegetation on them. The shrubs and wild flowers along the path to Falicon are remarkably varied and beautiful; while the botanist will find a rich collection of rare mosses and lichens, favoured by the unusual shade and moisture, clothing the banks and old walls.

Along the Turin road an expedition may be made to Peille or Peglia, one of the strange rock villages which resemble the wonderful aërial monasteries of the Levant, described by Mr. Curzon in his book. After passing the villages of La Trinité and Drap, which are interesting only to the geologist as offering one of the best fields for the examination of modern marine deposits, the path deserts the main stream of the

torrent of the Paglione, and proceeds several miles over the mountains, and then by innumerable zig-zags cut out of the loose *débris* of disintegrated yellow rock on the north side of the deep gorge, the human eyrie is reached. It looks as if it were hung up in the sky, and altogether inaccessible from below. It is not unlike Gourdon both in architecture and in natural scenery. It must at one time have been a place of great importance, protected by a grim fortress, whose ruined ramparts with their merlons and loopholes may still be seen. The dark sombre church, with its characteristic tower, belongs to a very early period; and the houses are mostly built in the Gothic style, with pillared windows and carved doorways ornamented with mottoes and armorial bearings. One of the most frequent heraldic symbols is the head of a bull, which appears at the corners of several houses, and is carved in bold relief on a slab of white marble over the door of the ancient palace where the Juge-mage pronounced his sentences from the balcony above.

But the most delightful excursion in the neighbourhood is to the top of Mont Chauve. This is now an almost unattainable enjoyment, as, owing to a fort having been built within the last few years on the summit, the usual restrictions are placed in the way. But permission to ascend the mountain can be obtained with some trouble, and it is certainly worth while to get it. This pyramidal hill, which rises to a height of nearly 3,000 feet, meets the eye from almost every point of the landscape around Nice, and allures the visitor to make the ascent. This seems much easier than it proves in reality. There is a good deal of rough ground to traverse before you get fairly upon the hill; and the surface of the higher parts above the limit of cultivation is so broken and covered with sharp angular stones of limestone, without a particle of soil or vegetation to upholster them, that both the eye and the foot are fatigued by the universal sterility. Only the spiny Euphorbia is hardy enough to subsist in the arid waste, and its grey cushions, few and far between, afford a grateful resting-place for the weary foot. The rock of which the hill is composed is the coral rag, and one might almost as well walk over the top of a recent coral reef as over this ancient geological one, solidified into stone, that has been weathered into all kinds of sharp prominent surfaces, as if to perpetuate the memory of its former condition when it existed amid the waves of the sea. On a small plateau near the top some fertile soil has been formed, and here there is a farm with some huts and cultivated fields around them, whose greenness and home-suggestiveness contrasts vividly with the grey desiccation everywhere else. From this plateau a well-made path winds round the broad cone which forms the summit, and is shaded by a plantation of young pine-trees, which thrive astonishingly well in the baked soil and dry air. The top is level, and is of considerable extent, covered with large patches of green turf and clumps of stunted pines, which wage an unequal war with the storms that prevail at this altitude. There are unmistakable traces of a primitive Ligurian fort having once occupied this commanding position.

The warm resinous smell of the pine-trees, brought out by the hot sun, pervades all the air. The view, as might have been expected, is very extensive; and the most striking part of it is the back, where huge storm-scalped mountains, their bare brown sides seamed and scarred by countless elemental wars, rise above the picturesque valley of the Vésubie and the scenes around St. Martin Lantosque, their highest points on the horizon beyond Entraque and the Col de Fenestra being covered with the purest snow. To the west lies the long deep Magnan valley, filled with shadows, stretching from the lofty mountain village of Aspremont at its head down to the sea; the purple Genestiera range of hills, diversified here and there by some airy village and picturesque church campanile; and beyond these the remarkable broad channel of the Var, with its tiny rills glistening over acres of brown mud and sand. While the view to the east, consisting mainly of high undulating hills, embraces the curious village of Chateauneuf, which is perched on a breezy eminence, very nearly on a level with the top of Mont Chauve itself, and seeming only a quarter of a mile distant. This village, like a modern Pompeii, consists of a number of grey ruined houses, very solidly built, and walls falling to pieces. It was abandoned at the beginning of the century, owing to the failure of the water supply. It was once a robbers' nest, from which the inhabitants sallied down from time to time to ravage the lowlands, and a strange Nemesis has now overtaken it. From the road to Falicon it presents a most romantic appearance—a crown of human ruins hanging high up in the air, and frowning dark against the sunset.

Glorious excursions may be made to the sub-Alpine gorges and villages to the north of Mont Chauve. An admirable road leads up to the valley of the Vésubie, traversed every day by diligence from Nice. The first village of importance on this route is Levens, the head-quarters of the ancient Lepontii, who gave their name to the Lepontine Alps, standing on its plateau, commanding an extensive view of the basin of the Var. This is the birthplace of Massena, whose parents were Jews, and who began life as a humble potboy in one of the rude inns of the village. Three miles beyond, on the other side of the Col du Dragon, is Duranus, with its magnificent precipices rising from the bed of the Vésubie, from one of which, the Saut des Français, six hundred feet high, many of the Republican troops under Massena were hurled into the river by the indignant inhabitants whom they had so long ill-used in 1792. Farther on is the very old village of Utelle, the seat of the ancient Aratelli, held by the Templars, and possessed of a church of the twelfth century, with massive towers and beautiful carving inside. Through a narrowing gorge and over an ascending road, Lantosque is reached, charmingly situated, surrounded by hills covered with chestnut trees. At the head of the valley is St. Martin Lantosque, which is a well-known summer retreat of the Niçois, where the picturesque costumes and the primitive manners of the peasantry are disappearing rapidly before the extension of hotels, pensions, and villas, and the invasion of fashionable life. St.

Martin Lantosque is a very ancient village, having been the seat of a *commanderie* in the time of the Templars, who chose St. Martin as one of the patrons of their warlike order. The surrounding scenery is truly magnificent, with its splendid chestnut woods intermingled with cherry-trees, a foaming river filling all the air with the animating noise of many waters, and high fir-clad cliffs interrupted by lateral ravines, up which bewitching glimpses of the snowy peaks of Mont Gélas and the Clapier may be obtained. The fields and woods are brilliant with verdure, and richly enamelled with glowing masses of orchises, tulips, lovely yellow fritillarias, white and violet crocuses, purple soldanellas, and other Alpine flowers, nourished by the clear atmosphere, brilliant sunshine, and abounding moisture of the soil. The extremely rare Pomponian lily, with its beautiful red blossoms, grows here abundantly in the meadows; and on the cliffs tufts of the equally rare *Mœhringia dasyphyllum* may not unfrequently be seen. Indeed, within a narrow range may be found a large number of the rarest Alpine plants, some of which, such as the *Saxifraga Lantosca* and the *Saxifraga florulenta*, are not found anywhere else.

One of the remarkable sights of the neighbourhood of St. Martin is the Sanctuary of the Virgin, which used to serve as a hospice for travellers crossing over the Alps from France into Italy. Above it is the great crag of the Col de Fenestra, upwards of 8,000 feet above the level of the sea, with a curious cleft in its peak resembling a window, through which the daylight is seen. On the ridge of rocks beyond the Sanctuary grows by far the most interesting plant of this region, the *Saxifraga florulenta*, confined to a very small area of the Maritime Alps and found nowhere else in the world. It was discovered in 1824 by an English tourist, who sent specimens to Professor Moretti of Pavia, by whom a description of it was published. After this the habitat was lost for many years, and was vainly sought for by many botanists, who were beginning to regard it as a fabulous plant; when, in 1856, it was accidentally rediscovered on the Col de Fenestra by M. Lisa, and soon after by M. l'Abbé Montolivo, a first-rate botanist, who was Keeper of the Municipal Library at Nice, and had a beautiful botanical garden on the shore below Eza. It has been found in one or two isolated spots on this range; but it is far from frequent, and all the places are within a radius of four or five miles of the original habitat. It is a remarkable plant, with its great vigorous tufts of glossy green rosettes half a foot in diameter nestling under projecting rocks facing the north. These rosettes attain a great age before flowering, and are therefore usually barren. The blossom, which is rarely seen, is truly splendid, consisting of a multitude of flowers of a dull red colour, produced in a dense thyrsus on a sticky stem about a foot and a half high. When the flowers are put forth the rosettes die and fall upon the snowfields below the cliffs, littering their surface for many years with their undecayed masses.

The rock of the Château divides Nice into two parts. To the east a portion of the old town, which has of late years been greatly changed by the destruction of

Photo, Giletta, Nice. *Villefranche.*

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old buildings and streets, and the construction of new, encircles the harbour called Port Lympia, and is inhabited by a seafaring population chiefly. In this neighbourhood Garibaldi was born and Paganini died; and the Rue Segurana still commemorates the prowess of the Niçois Joan of Arc, Caterina Segurana, who, in 1543, at the head of a party of her compatriots, attacked and defeated the allied French and Turkish forces, commanded by Francis Rourbon and the terrible Barbarossa, striking down with her own hands the standard-bearer. Beyond the port along the new road to Villefranche the slopes of Mont Boron are covered with magnificent villas, each enclosed in its garden of palms and orange-trees, Wigandias, and other luxuriant semi-tropical vegetation. A walk or drive round the numerous roads and pathways recently made on the hill amid dense fragrant pine-woods, and commanding very fine views of Nice and the surrounding mountains, including the grand precipice of St. Jeannet and the village at its foot, is exceedingly enjoyable. Mont Boron is covered at the top, crowned with the fort of Montalban, with thickets of tall cistus and tree-euphorbia. The sweet alyssum fringes the pathways everywhere with its drift of scented snow; and the thyme and rosemary clothe the stony slopes with a hoary beauty. Nowhere else is the *Pistacia lentiscus*, or mastic-tree, so luxuriant as here, covering the driest rocks with its glossy evergreen leaves and clusters of small red berries. It is specially interesting as being closely allied to the terebinth of sacred story, which is distinctively the tree of Palestine, as the palm is the tree of the desert. Among the bushes of lentiscus may be found associated very fine bushes of the singular *Cneorum tricoccum*, with its coriaceous narrow leaves and three round beads of fruit, the only European representative of the tropical family of the quassia. It seems to be confined to this neighbourhood, where it covers all the low stony hills with its curious bushes, and forms an unusual feature in the landscape. Another very rare plant whose geographical distribution is perhaps more limited than any other, being almost confined to the coast district between Nice and Mentone, is the Nice Snowflake (*Leucorium Nicæense*) distinguished at once by its split spathe. It is much sought after on account of its rarity; but there is no danger of its extermination, as it grows in many unfrequented spots and does not flower till the equinox.

The land-locked Bay of Villefranche, the Portus Olivulæ of the Romans, on the other side of Mont Boron, is like a quiet inland tarn, with the dull sleepy town at its head under the shadow of its sterile crags, the French and American war vessels and yachts lying at anchor off the shore. This interesting old "Free-town" surrounded with fortifications, was founded by Charles II. of Anjou in the thirteenth century, and is associated with the landing of Pope Adrian VI. and Charles V., and with the embarking of the body of the Prince Imperial of Russia in the spring of 1866. Beyond Villefranche is the lovely village of Beaulieu, where the Marquis of Salisbury, the present prime minister of England, has a villa. Beaulieu is situated

in one of the most sheltered nooks in the Riviera, and embowered among orange, lemon and carouba trees, with tall hedges of roses and scented geraniums bordering the roads. Above it rise gigantic cliffs, quite perpendicular, with picturesque sky-lines fringed with pine-trees; and the ruddy limestone interstratified with patches of red sandstone, producing quite a feast of glowing colours; while olives struggle up the precipitous slopes softening them into beauty and become gradually dwarfed among the stony *débris*. Beaulieu is famous for its magnificent old olive-trees. A little above the station may still be seen the enormous stump of an olive-tree lately burnt to the ground by a madman, who danced among the flames. When standing, it required twelve persons with arms extended to measure its trunk, and was more than a thousand years old. Nowhere, except in the extreme south of Italy and Sicily, does the olive attain the size which it reaches in this exceptionally favoured spot. Though this tree does not seem at first to unfamiliar eyes so beautiful as our own northern birch, which it somewhat superficially resembles, one learns after a while to love it more than any other tree. Sombre and monotonous as it looks at a distance, it exhibits near at hand a singular variety of hues and forms; now looking hoary and soft, when the wind blows its leaves one way, like a luminous haze or a veil of warm light; and now, when the leaves are still in the breathless air, dark and awful, like the shadow of a thunder-cloud. Nowhere does the sky look so blue as through the meshes of its foliage; and its trunk and roots are gnarled and twisted, as if it produced its wealth of foliage and fruit through much sore struggle with circumstances. While in our own birch, with its silvery stem and airy foliage, we see, as it were, the laugh of nature at the completion of her adorning the hills with the softest moss and the greenest verdure, we see in the olive, with its rugged, cavernous trunk and sombre foliage, the smoke, as it were, of the earth's torment in forming out of the driest air and the barest rock, with the hardest struggle, the annual miracle of the multiplication of its cruse of oil. It is a weird and solemn tree with a kind of hard passion in its lurid leaves, and a divine fury torturing its limbs like a vegetable Laocoon. Beneath its shades we dream of Olivet and the Garden of Gethsemane, and its leaves seem ever to whisper of the awful agony through which the world was redeemed. There is no tree whose associations are so entirely Scriptural. It is like sharing in the life of the companions of our Lord to see from November to April, on the olive-coloured heights above Nice, the peasants shaking down from the trees the sloe-black berries into great sheets spread upon the ground, or to pass by a simple olive-mill in some sequestered dell, crushing out of the glistening fruit the finest and thinnest oil—the same oil which fed the flame of the golden candlestick in the Jewish temple, and anointed the head of King David, as well as entered as an element of relish and nourishment into the common food, of which our Lord himself must have partaken.

Beaulieu is also famous for its carob, or carouba-trees. This tree has received

Photo, Giletta, Nice.

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Beaulieu.

its name from the Arabs, who first introduced it into the Riviera. It is also called St. John's bread, from the erroneous supposition that its fruit supplied the food of John the Baptist in the wilderness. Its technical name, *Ceratonia*, is derived from the Greek name applied to its curious pods, *keratia*, literally, "little horns." These pods supplied the original *carat* weights of jewellers and goldsmiths; hence the origin of the name. Nowhere in the Holy Land are there such splendid specimens of this tree as at Villefranche and Beaulieu, in the neighbourhood of Nice, sending up from wide-spreading, half-bared roots, and knotted, powerful trunks, their dense crown of glossy foliage in the midst of olive groves, or alone on the sunny shore. It is here far north of its proper latitude, being in other parts of Europe confined to the extreme south of Italy and Greece. Nothing can give a greater idea of vegetable vigour and endurance than its massive trunk and stout, leathery, evergreen leaves; and yet it is in reality less hardy than the olive. It can endure any amount of heat, for it flourishes in Central Africa where the olive is unknown; but it is impatient of cold, and perishes where the olive would thrive. It may therefore be regarded as a vegetable thermometer along the shores of the Riviera. Its pods, containing a thick pithy substance very sweet to the taste, are given to horses and mules, but though often eaten by human beings, they are leathery, and have a disagreeable smell and sickly flavour. Hence the touching reference to them in the Parable of the Prodigal Son, when it is said that, having spent all his money, he had come to want in the far country, and was fain to fill his belly with the *keratia*, or husks which the swine did eat. There is one most remarkable peculiarity which the carouba possesses, and which is altogether unknown among leguminous plants; it often produces its pods not only at the extremities of its twigs in the manner of other trees, but also straight from the bark of the principal branches—and even from the thick trunk itself. In this respect it is allied to another tree belonging to the Holy Land—the sycamore or mulberry-fig, which has its fruit growing directly from the trunk itself on little twigs, and in clusters like the grape.

From this point extends out into the sea for two miles the richly-wooded promontory of St. Hospice, with its quiet fishing village of St. Jean, its Saracenic tower and mouldering ruins, its little deserted church of the eleventh century; and westward its wild sea-facing cliffs and uncultivated downs covered with dense bushes of tree-euphorbia, myrtle and cistus. The solitary grave of Charles Best, cut out of the rock and arched over, may be seen at the farthest extremity of the peninsula, where the wild waves ever dash with a sad requiem at the foot of the crags. The myrtle fruits here in great abundance, and the rose-like blossoms of the cistus make a garden in the wilderness, displaying day after day in unlimited profusion their large white or crimson petals, which fulfil their function in a few hours and then drop off. A strange fungus-like parasite not unfrequently grows upon the cistus

roots called *Cytinus hypocistis*, producing rosy flowers from a stem covered with yellowish scales instead of green leaves, and to the sea-cliffs clings a charming shrub the *Anthyllis Barba Jovis*, with its silvery pinnate foliage covered with down and its pale yellow flowers. From the look-out station at the highest point the view of the wonderful coast is unusually extensive and magnificent. Nowhere could a meditative person spend a few days more pleasantly than in the little village of St. Jean, with the memories of the Templars and the Saracens overshadowing it and deepening its rural peace. It occupies the site of a Roman village called Fraxinetum, from the forest of ash trees by which it was surrounded. Its name gave origin to that of the fortress of the Little Fraxinet of Moorish times, whose relics crown the highest peak of the promontory. Here may be obtained in perfection that fearful and wonderful concoction called Bouillabaise, which, if a man survives, he may well be entitled to the honours of apotheosis, and be superior henceforward to all culinary evils. There, too, the naturalist will have an opportunity of studying the largest lizards in Europe, which are frequent among the Moorish ruins at the end of the promontory; and also the marine mollusca, zoophytes, and fish for which this part of the Mediterranean is celebrated. In this place also is the only tunny-fishing between Marseilles and Genoa. The tunny belongs to the mackerel family, only that it reaches a much larger size, being sometimes fifteen feet in length, and is much esteemed for its flesh, which resembles beef, and is either preserved in salt or by being boiled in oil. The fishing season begins in February and usually lasts till August, but shoals of fish often approach the coast, and are caught by a very effective apparatus called a madrague, which is a kind of labyrinth of nets arranged in a series of chambers into which the fish successively enter; the last chamber called the *corpon*, or chamber of death, being furnished with a movable floor of netting, can be lifted up by strong ropes attached to it, so as to bring the imprisoned fish to the surface of the sea where they can easily be despatched. In the calm moonlight night one often hears on the bay of St. Jean the plash of oars and the song of the fishermen as they arrange their madrague; and the spectacle of a *tonnara*, or fishing, is said to be extremely exciting.

VI.

THE VALLONS OF NICE.

THE inland horizon of Nice is bounded by long ridges and conical summits, the rugged spurs and offshoots of the Maritime Alps, composed for the most part of the geological formation called the coral-rag or coraline oolite. No barer rocks can be seen anywhere. They are utterly destitute of vegetation, except a crustaceous lichen, that gives them a pearly grey bloom; but the glowing sunshine lights them up with a rich warmth of colouring peculiar to southern climates. Within this crescent of hills, and sloping down to the Mediterranean shore, is a vast amphitheatre, whose richness and variety of verdure contrast in the most striking manner with the sterility of the mountains. It is dotted with villas gleaming white amid garden foliage; while olive-woods cover all the blank spaces, showing dimly grey or darkly green as cloud or sunshine rests upon their leaves. This lovely landscape, with its rich cultivation, which intervenes between Nice and the hills, belongs to an entirely different geological horizon. The Jurassic limestones of the mountains give place to conglomerate strata, which are referred to the Pleiocene period. They contain rounded water-worn stones of different sizes and varied mineral character. This peculiar pudding stone is widely distributed along the Riviera, between the Esterels and San Rémo. The whole region of the Var and the Paglione is composed of it; the romantic town of Roccabruna is built on masses of it that have slid down from the heights; and above Bordighera it attains an elevation of about five thousand feet. The conglomerate is of a very solid description, the pebbles being held together by a calcareous cement so firmly that it is with the utmost difficulty they can be extracted. The formation has a special geological interest, as it represents a series of sea-beaches, and consequently indicates the former existence of coast-lines hundreds of feet higher than the present level of the Mediterranean. The pebbles were derived from the older rocks of the Alpine ranges, and were either carried down by ancient rivers or deposited on the margin of the sea, which then came up to the foot of the Jurassic cliffs. In many places, particularly in the dry beds of streams, this conglomerate is quarried and the dolomitic matter with which

the pebbles are cemented is separated by riddling, and used for building purposes. The conglomerate not unfrequently rests upon or alternates with beds of fine Pleiocene clays; and the thickness of the whole deposit is immense.

This peculiar tertiary stratification occupies all the low hilly region between the Paglione and the Var, and slopes up from the shore to Mont Chauve. Its vast extent, however, is not fully realised until one has thoroughly explored it. To the west of Nice it is seamed by long clefts and narrow dividing valleys, the beds of torrents which, during the rainy season, contain a large body of water, but for most of the year are dry, fringed with vivid green moss, or clothed with tangled vegetation. The chief valley is the Magnan, which extends from the sea to beyond the village of Aspremont, on the shoulders of Mont Chauve, and is of considerable width, its sides sloping upwards to the high ridges, and leaving a wide space open to the heavens. It is a lovely valley, richly wooded and cultivated, producing on its sunny slopes some of the finest wines of Provence. A stream flows through it, which, though often diverted for purposes of irrigation, still contains an unusual quantity of water. To the west of this valley there are several narrow ravines, such as the Val Mapurga and the Val de Barla; and to the east there are the Val de St. Philippe and the Val de la Mantega. Between these ravines there is a strong family resemblance. They are uniformly wide at their mouths where they open upon the shore, but they narrow at the top into mere fissures or clefts, with lofty perpendicular walls fringed with shrubs and boughs in wild confusion. In the language of the country they are called *vallons*, this being an old Provençal word for *torrents*; so that the name does not, strictly speaking, signify the valley through which a streamlet flows, but the streamlet itself. It is a peculiar word, and it expresses a remarkable natural phenomenon.

The most characteristic example of a Nissard vallon is that which is well known to every visitor as the Vallon Obscur. It is a narrow fissure between perpendicular walls of rock, from one to two hundred feet high. It winds for more than a quarter of a mile through this formation, and in some places the walls approach so closely that there seems little more than room to pass—although there is a tradition that a mad Englishman on one occasion drove a carriage-and-four through it. The succession of views looking back is exceedingly weird, the vista being closed up at every bend by the interlacing of the opposite walls of rock. At the bottom, the flicker of sunlight and shadow playing upon the walls is often very beautiful; while the narrow space of blue sky that roofs the gorge is of the deepest violet, seen filtered through the mass of varied foliage fringing the edge of the rocks. A little pellucid stream meanders through it, which in dry weather offers no obstruction to the visitor, though it spreads itself over the whole channel; but after heavy rain it is apt to become troublesome. The children of the neighbouring farmhouses are always on the alert to act as guides to the visitor, provided with boards, by means of

Photo, Giletta, Nice.

Vallon Obscur.

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which the deeper parts may be crossed. If not employed, they are occasionally mischievous, instances being known of their having hurled down stones into the gorge for the purpose of annoying and even endangering the safety of those who refused to take advantage of their services.

The walls are tapestried with the delicate fronds of the maidenhair fern; and in the moist nooks the liverwort spreads in great dark green patches, and cushions of moss gleam in the glints of sunshine that seek them out in their hiding-places and illumine them with a laugh of triumph. Precautions must be taken before entering the defile, as the contrast between the hot sunshine without and the damp cold air of the interior is somewhat trying; and the narrow cleft acts as a funnel through which even a moderate breeze acquires a degree of penetrating force very uncomfortable. The walls on either side as you pass along present a curious study, looking as if they had been built by a race of pigmies, able only to handle small stones and pebbles, and setting them above each other in little tiers and courses with the utmost regularity and neatness. The most careless mind is led to ask, how were these masses of conglomerate formed? Each of the stones in the wall represents an antiquity inconceivable. During the last two or three thousand years the waves have been constantly abrading the sea-coast, and the rivers bearing unceasingly their burdens of stones and sediment to the ocean, the currents of which have been incessantly engaged in their transportation and deposition; and yet how insignificant is the amount of sensible change that has been produced! The contours of Egypt and Palestine, Italy and Greece, are almost the same now as they were in the earliest periods of recorded history, and witness to the exceedingly small progress of waves and rivers in their insatiable task of destruction during thousands of years. How long, then, would the same agencies require to break off from their native rocks, carry into the sea, and round by the friction of the waves and by their abrading action against each other, the stones which form this huge mass of conglomerate, more than two hundred feet above ground, and how deep under ground no one can tell? How long would the successive layers of this pebbly sea-beach take in being deposited and consolidated by means of a calcareous cement—at first depressed beneath the level of the sea by an exceedingly slow and continuous action, and subsequently elevated to their present height in a manner equally slow and continuous? These are idle questions to ask; for we have no geological chronometer by which to measure the vast ages that must have been consumed in the process. This rift in the rock seems like a catacomb of inanimate creation, in which, instead of the remains of organic life, we have the relics of extinct mountains and seas, and the records of mechanical laws and natural operations overwhelming in their grandeur and importance.

The way to the Vallon Obscur from Nice is one of the most delightful excursions in the neighbourhood of the city. It takes you past the romantic monastery of

St. Barthélemy, and the foot of the cypress-shaded hill on which the Villa Arson is situated, where Talleyrand resided for some time, and where Lord Lytton wrote one of his novels. It is said that the name of the monastery suggested to Meyerbeer, who was living at the time in Nice, the title of his famous opera, "Les Huguenots," regarding which a sarcastic Frenchman said that "Catholics and Protestants killed each other, while a Jew found the music." Beyond this the valley contracts, and the path passes along the dry bed of a stream between two walls. The dale in which you now find yourself has a quiet English beauty about it very rare in this southern clime. The scenery in the neighbourhood of Nice, although grand and beautiful superficially, loses much of its charm on closer inspection. The dryness of the climate prevents the growth of grass, moss, lichen, and all those lowly plants which clothe the nakedness and soften down the asperities of the soil and rock. And hence, underneath the luxuriant foliage of olive, carouba, and orange, you see the brown baked earth; and the features of the scene have a hard, dry, artificial look which repulses instead of winning you. You long for the far more beautiful woodlands of the north, where the outlines of nature are filled in, and all her roughnesses toned down by those minute existences which love the dew and the shade, and make such exquisite fairy carpets and draperies for the tender play of light and shade. Here the Creator in the noonday heat has, as it were, hastily sketched His glorious work in passing by; in our northern wooded dells, on the other hand, He has rested in the cool of the evening, and leisurely filled in the picture with loving hand, covering each stone with a cushion of moss, making each tree-trunk venerable with the hoar-frost of lichen, planting flowers whose beauty is more in their foliage than in their blossoms in each cleft and corner, and giving to every nook its tuneful mavis and its playful rabbit and squirrel. Like this after-work of the Creator under the weeping skies of Britain, is the gracious loveliness of the dell out of which the Vallon Obscur leads. The lofty banks come near enough to afford a grateful coolness, but not too near to obscure the bright sky, or prevent the sunshine from illumining the whole place with its mellow light. The scars in the banks are healed by soft touches of ivy and honeysuckle and aristolochia; and where they are exposed give a wild picturesqueness to the scene. Olives, with their grey silvery leaves and black boles illuminated by large primrose-coloured rosettes of goat-lichen, hushed and fearful as if dreaming over the midnight scene in Gethsemane, clothe all the terraces. Fields of greenest grass shine in the soft light, and all the air is sweet with the delicate breath of myriads of wild flowers and wafts of perfume from hidden bean-blossoms, and thrilled with the glad songs of birds and the drowsy hum of bees. And, sweetest joy of all, there is a brook full to the brim with clear cold water, flowing through the grass and under the trees on its way to awaken to a surprise of fertility gardens and fields that are dry and leafless under the hot stagnant sunshine nearer the town. Its channel is artificial, and it indicates clearly the

use to which it is to be put; but here it dances with the free laugh of childhood, and sings its merry song among the flowers that hang fondly over it, whose life it quickens, and whose loveliness it doubles by reflection. Is there in all nature a fairer sight; especially fair in this land of drought, where the streams are silent, and the hill-sides bare and white, and the fields wasting under a remorseless sun? An inspiration of the old Provençal feeling that sparkled in the poetry of the troubadours gave to these waters the appropriate name of Vargorbella, or Beautiful Wave. The whole nook is one of nature's choicest cloisters, where the shade has no chill, and the sunbeams are filtered through green leaves, and the peace is idyllic.

In the valley of the Magnan there are several vallons formed in the steep banks on either side. One especially interesting is on the western side, a short distance from the entrance of the valley. You cross the stream dryshod opposite a little cluster of houses, where women are washing clothes in the scanty pools, and you find yourself at the mouth of a yawning cleft in the precipitous face of the hill. The soft clayey banks are here covered with a luxuriant vegetation of rosemary, lavender, and other aromatic flowering plants and shrubs. At the end of March large bushes of coronilla and prickly broom display their golden wealth of blossoms; and high overhead are groups of maritime pines, which well merit the name which the old Greeks gave them—"wind haunted"—for as the sea-shell holds for ever the murmur of the waves, so these pines, on the calmest day and in the most sheltered spots, retain the sound of every breeze that has passed through them. You would think, listening to their sigh, they were tuning their lyre for rehearsing a storm. But the most interesting sight is that of large bushes of heather—the handsome pink *Erica multiflora*, more than two feet high, and densely branched—covering the whole hillside. It flowers in autumn, and remains in blossom during most of the winter; and even in spring, when I saw it, its masses of withered blossoms, of a rusty red, shine with the most brilliant effect in the sunshine, which transfigures the dullest faded leaf into a glowing ruby, so that it is difficult to say when it is most beautiful—in the season of fresh bloom, or when its flowering is past. Although the withered blossoms easily fall off when a branch is cut and dried, they remain on the growing bush persistently until pushed off by the new ones. This species of heather is very rare in the Riviera, being only found on the slopes of the Magnan valley, and in the pine-woods of St. Jean at the end of the promontory of St. Hospice at Villefranche.

Much narrower and higher than the Vallon Obscur is the ravine into which we now enter. It is considered rather a feat to go to the end, for in some places the walls approach so closely that a stout man would have some difficulty in squeezing himself through; and the chill air and damp shade give one a feeling as of being at the bottom of a deep mine. No adventurous ray of sunlight penetrates the gloom, and the diffused daylight at the brink, by the time it reaches the bottom, has become

a dreary twilight. The damp and shade are eminently favourable to the growth of those humble flowerless plants that are associated with the fairy scenery of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*. The maidenhair fern grows here in greater luxuriance and beauty than in the Vallon Obscur. The walls of the very narrow fissure afford a most interesting study to the naturalist, not only on account of the varied mineralogical character of the pebbles of which they are composed, but also from the fact that on the exposed surface of each of these pebbles there are minute crustaceous lichens, which give them a singular appearance when closely examined. Sometimes three or four species grow together on the prominent round tip of a stone, of different colours, from deep black to a smoky brown, pale pink, or pure chalky-white so closely pressed to the surface that they seem a part of the stone. Each is surrounded with a border-line, which separates it from its neighbour and marks out its size with the utmost distinctness; and these boundary lines along with the little dots of the fructification spread over the crustaceous spaces enclosed, give the surface of the pebble a tessellated appearance like that of a map. One species of Opegrapha, more abundant than all others, is covered with these black lines, of different shapes, like the letters of an Eastern alphabet. It is curious to see these autographs of nature in such a dreary place, as if she wished to record her name and make the place of her feet everywhere glorious. One is overwhelmed with the overflowing fulness of life, when even the pebbles in this dark rift of rock are not left unadorned with it. Crowds of fancies come into one's mind, inspired by these runes of nature. Could we interpret the mysteries which even one of these pebbles contains, what a wonderful history we should have unfolded to us! What forces unknown rounded its shape, and bore it hither, and built it so compactly into the wall that you cannot extract it without help of chisel and hammer? And what is the secret of the strange life that has fastened on its surface, which seems to partake of its own passivity and changelessness, and in summer's heat and winter's cold remains for years, and perhaps centuries, the same? Who shall read the "Mene, mene," written on these walls by the fingers of a Hand that is viewless?

About a quarter of a mile from the entrance the vallon terminates in a *cul de sac*. Here there is a large comparatively open space, with the walls upwards of two hundred feet perpendicular, forming a complete circle, covered with green moss throughout; and hanging out here and there from every fissure or projection, with charming effect, are great glossy leaves of the hart's tongue, and fretted fronds of the lady-fern. It seems like a hall of Eblis. On the farther side, the circular wall is fluted with a deeper semicircle, having a hollowed, curved lip at the top, lined with a longer and still greener moss pressed and matted together in a downward direction, and still wet with the vanished waters of the torrent that has scooped out the fluting. After a flood, this spot must present a magnificent appearance, although it would be quite inaccessible from below at such a time. Down the green wall of

rock would tumble a snowy waterfall, two hundred feet high, with a deafening roar, filling all the air with its blinding spray, and making a perfect witches' cauldron of the place. We see here how the vallon was formed. The drainage of the heights collected into a channel, which it cut out for itself with augmented force according to its restricted area. The waters would dig, in some softer part of their course, a hole in the conglomerate, and from this vantage-point would work their way backward into the side of the hill. The stones detached from the matrix and wielded with the force of the stream, would greatly help the erosive action, until, at length, this deep cutting would be produced. Such vallons could be formed only in a region where the erosion of the stream itself is at work—where there is little or no action of rain, springs or frosts perpetually loosening the sides of the water-course, and filling up its channel with their *débris*. In this dry land where frosts hardly ever occur, and rain is very infrequent, a stream is not interfered with by these subaërial agents, and therefore, in time digs out for itself a gorge with more or less precipitous sides. Where, on the other hand, there is interference by these agencies, the vallon or ravine is changed into a wider valley with sloping sides. The unusually large number of vallons around Nice is owing to the erosion of streams, unmodified by any other form of atmospheric denudation. It is because the rainfall is so small as to reduce pluvial action to a minimum, and frosts are almost unknown, or at least so slight and transient as to be unimportant. Precisely the same cause, on a more gigantic scale, and working for longer periods, has produced the tremendous gorges or cañons of the Colorado, which are from 3,000 to 6,000 feet perpendicular—a wall of precipice or natural section unparalleled in any other part of the globe.

During the three months that I once spent at Nice there were only three days of rain, and the quantity that fell on these occasions was comparatively small. It was, indeed, an exceptionally dry season. Usually, however, the average number of rainy days in the year is between sixty and seventy. The principal rainfalls occur generally at the end of September and beginning of October, and at the end of March and beginning of April, during the autumnal and vernal equinoxes. After the autumn equinox there is a lengthened period of dry weather; and when the spring equinox is ended hardly any rain falls for five or six months. This great summer drought is due to the fact that the Riviera is on the northern limit of the rainless tract which comprises the sandy desert of Sahara. When rain comes with a southerly wind, it often descends with tropical violence, suddenly filling the dry stony beds of the streams and rivers with large volumes of water, rushing impetuously along, and carrying with them great quantities of earth and stones. Very rapidly, however, the spate subsides, and the streams and rivers dry up or shrink to their ordinary insignificant proportions. The quantity of sediment brought down to the sea by these floods, however, must be enormous.

How long the process of excavating the vallons may have taken we have no means of computing. The process was not continuous, but spasmodic and intermittent. Long periods of rest intervened between periods of violent action. For the greater part of the year the beds of the vallons are perfectly dry; and the floods that occasionally come are of a variable duration and volume, and produce results of corresponding variability. Working upon a material so easily disintegrated as a calcareous conglomerate, the process of excavation may not have taken very long, reckoning by geological ideas of time. Perhaps man was in existence when the drainage was on the surface, before the deep rifts in the rock were scooped out. Human remains have been found in the neighbourhood, and especially near Mentone, in conjunction with those of animals, and in circumstances which would seem to indicate that they belong to this formation. It is possible, then, that human eyes may have seen the commencement of those processes of denudation which have made the scenery in the neighbourhood of Nice so beautiful and varied.

Numerous vallons of the same kind occur on both sides of the Magnan valley. The hill-sides are seamed with them, and each in the rainy season sends the tribute of its waters into the main stream. Every two hundred or three hundred yards you come to an opening which is usually half concealed by a wild tangle of thorny smilax, myrtle, and arbutus. The bramble, which is ubiquitous—as common on the Mediterranean shores as in our own woods—disputes your passage with its long clinging arms; and you wish, when almost hopelessly caught by its formidable prickles, that instead of the briar, the myrtle-tree would come up more abundantly in these places. I penetrated to the end of a large number of the vallons here with some degree of difficulty; and with some variations of length, breadth, and height, I found that the same general description applied to them all. The geological phenomena were very much the same. Some of the vallons had walls of a fine white clay, which lent themselves temptingly to the scribbling propensities of visitors. The mosses and ferns that tapestried the walls were also very much the same. I observed in most of the vallons numerous convoluted worm-castings, tower-like in shape, constructed of the whitish calcareous soil. They are from two to three inches in height, and about one in diameter. A small cylindrical passage runs up the centre of each tower, through which the worm ascends to eject the earth which it has swallowed, and thus add to the height of the casting. I often found the thin red worm in this passage when I broke the tower. Darwin has noticed these curious productions in his interesting work on vegetable mould and earthworms. They are numerous in the olive-yards and waste grounds about Nice, and are caused by several species of perichæta, which, strange to say, are not endemic, but are natives of Cochin-China, the Philippine Islands and India. The tower-like castings of Nice are almost identical with those which occur in great abundance about Calcutta. It is a curious question how these worms got to Nice and became naturalised there as

well as at Montpellier and Algiers. Earthworms, it is well known, inhabit isolated islands, such as Kerguelen's Land, St. Helena, Madagascar, and the Falkland group; and as they are easily killed by salt water, their germs must have been transported by migratory birds in soil clinging to their feet. This must have been the agency that brought the worms of the distant East to the shores of the Mediterranean.

One of the Magnan vallons struck me as specially remarkable. It was even longer and deeper than the one I have described; and its sides towards the end were tapestried with the largest and loveliest fronds of the maidenhair fern I had ever seen—more than half a foot in breadth and two feet long. Nothing could exceed their luxuriance, and the tenderness and delicacy of the pinnæ, as they hung from their slender black wire-like stems, without a stain on their vivid greenness or a disfiguration in their perfect grace. Not an inch of the walls of the vallon was left naked; it was, from top to bottom, one unbroken mass of the most exquisite verdure. It was a sight which no fernery or greenhouse ever exhibited, and which it was worth while going to the antipodes to see. Here, too, in the mossy clefts of the walls, nearer the entrance, linger large tufts of the sweet-scented violet late into April—long after they have entirely disappeared in the open grounds. The coolness and shade are like a winter climate which retards their flowering and darkens their hue. Nowhere else do they have such a delicious fragrance as in these prisons of nature unvisited by the sun. The whole suggestiveness and sweetness of spring seem in that narrow spot concentrated in their perfume and hue.

On the eastern side, between the Magnan valley and the long sloping ridge of Cimiez, there are several very interesting vallons, which it would take weeks to explore, so intricate and extensive are they. They open up on the upper side of the Rue de France, behind the suburban shops and *cabarets*, and the detached villas with their gardens at the foot of the slope. And there cannot be a greater contrast than between the din and dazzling glare of the white street and the quiet loneliness and dewy freshness of the lanes into which you get almost immediately, becoming narrower and higher as you advance farther into the heart of the hills. Each large vallon has tributary vallons; these again have often also their tributaries. In some places the lateral gorges crowd so closely together that they are divided by perpendicular walls of clay or pudding-stone, which are so narrow at the top as hardly to furnish footing for a man. Along the intervening ridges there is either a footpath or a well-made road which unfolds a succession of views dear to the artist's heart. Here the ridge contracts, and you stand upon the edge of a tremendous escarpment which falls sheer down to a depth of 300 or 400 feet; it requires a very steady head to follow the path in such a place, its terrors being fully equal to its beauties. There the ridge widens, and slopes down more gradually to the bottom of the vallon—a line of stiff zig-zag tracks up the olive-coloured slope marking its steepness.

The ridge that overlooks the convent of St. Barthélemy and the Villa Arson is the finest. As you follow the winding road along the height, you pass successively rudely constructed cottages and farmsteads, surrounded by olive-yards and patches of vivid green wheat and beans in full flower, and country villas nestling snugly among orange-trees and flower-laden acacias—their trellised arcades covered with vines in their first tender leaf, or with showers of yellow and white Banksia roses, which have bloomed with unfailing beauty all winter and spring. In the clayey banks on either side you often see, half projecting, the curiously tapering white snail-shells, with a flat head like a truncated cone, called the *Bulimus decollatus;* and you are led to reflect, not only upon the problems connected with its survival through such vast periods of time down to our own days, but also upon the reason why it should, in common with the root of the devil's bit scabious, the crisped edges of the hawthorn blossom, and numbers of other similar objects, have such an unfinished look about it, like the easy carelessness of execution which delights us in a sketch by the hand of some great master. You meet, at rare intervals, a solitary peasant walking beside a rough ungainly mule carrying some heavy burden; or you see some comely matron standing beside her cottage-door, and with kindly courtesy they salute the passer-by, making you feel, in spite of your English reserve, a warm interest in your fellow-creatures. Stay and talk with them if you understand their rude Provençal dialect, so beautiful and refined in the love-songs of the celebrated troubadours, Arnaut Daniel and Peire Vidal; and you will find that, lonely and uneventful as their lives may seem, they have had their own share of the pathos and romance of humanity. They seem native to the soil, like the olives around them. They have not the fire and fickleness of the Italians. The calmness of nature seems to have infused itself into their blood, and the hardness of their lot has given them a soberness which, like the olive tree itself, only turns up its silvery smiling side when a rare breeze of joy passes over them. Farther on you come upon a group of agricultural labourers sitting under a clump of umbrella-pines enjoying their noonday meal; and near at hand you see men up in the olive-trees, shaking down into great sheets spread upon the ground the glistening black berries, and women and children beating the laden branches with long sticks. You mount up higher and higher, leaving the figs and the orange-trees behind, and come to the pines, whose pleasant resinous odour fills all the warm air, and which seem as if still dreaming of the winds that have lulled them to sleep; and instead of thickets of lentiscus, myrtle, and butcher's-broom, the bare stony soil is covered with wide patches of home-like heather and juniper-bushes. The air feels deliciously cool on the heights of the Col de Serena, at the far end of the ridge; and near at hand the shadows deepen in the valleys, and a warmer glow of colour marks all the long-extending plateaus, with their glimpses of distant hamlets and church campaniles. And, closing the northern horizon, the Maritime Alps lift up their calm white brows to heaven, sub-

duing the soul to their own sublime patience, and filling the heart with thoughts and yearnings too sacred for utterance.

The grandest of all the vallons are those which branch off from the eastern side of the valley of the Var, which, in spite of Louis Napoleon's annexation, is the natural boundary between France and Italy. Very picturesque is the Vallon of St. Isidore, but its sides are not at all precipitous or narrow. A more characteristic example is the Vallon des Étoiles, about four miles farther up the valley. This wonderful cleft in the hills opens off the Vallon de Lingostiera, a very lonely and dreary-looking place, completely shut out from the world, with a few houses and a church at the entrance. You diverge from the main road at the hamlet, and, passing a villa with very exclusive walls surrounding it, you traverse the dry bed of a torrent, and then skirt the edge of an olive-wood, brilliant in early spring with scarlet anemones, and at a solitary house, that looks as if it might have been the scene of some tragedy, so lonely and forsaken does it seem, you turn to the left. The walls of rock rise higher and approach nearer each other, covered with a profuse vegetation, and crowned with beautiful full-foliaged trees. You come to a place where two vallons break off. You enter the one to the right, and speedily come to the end of it. The one on the left leads you farther and farther into the heart of the hills. The rift is not more than four feet wide, and the walls ascend to a great height, quite perpendicular; in some places you have to squeeze yourself between them. Here there is almost the perpetual twilight of a dungeon; and, as the name of the vallon implies, you sometimes see the stars shining faintly in the narrow streak above, that looks like a zig-zag belt of blue studded with diamonds. The sun shines into the gorge for a short time at mid-day, and illumines it with the most extraordinary chiaro-oscuro effects. The walls of the vallon in some places are bare glacial clay, in other places they are formed of pudding-stone, and in others still they are composed of petrifactions formed by calcareous springs that ooze down their surface from above. Nearly everywhere they are draped with curtains of the most luxuriant transparent moss—*Bryum ligulatum* and other species, such as "steal the noises from our feet" in our own northern woods; and the maidenhair fern mingles its long pendent fronds with the delicate drapery. One fern is a special object of interest—the Cretan Brake (*Pteris Cretica*), so familiar to us in our conservatories. It used to be abundant in this and other vallons of the Var, but it is now nearly extirpated. It is easily known by its naked, slender stem, bearing at the top a knot of long, narrow green ribbons. A few tufts of it may still be found upon the moist ledges within reach, but it fringes the edge of the ravine, far up near the top, utterly inaccessible to the most adventurous fern collector, and in such situations it attains its full size and most perfect form. The specimens within reach are miserably dwarfed, broken, and soiled. Indeed, they owe their preservation to their worthlessness. The occurrence of this rare and peculiar fern, which is found nowhere else about Nice, except in the vallons

of the Var, is a suggestive circumstance. It has a wide geographical distribution over the area of the Mediterranean, abounding in the south of Italy and in the islands of the Levant; it also occurs in the Himalayas. Like the dwarf palm, the *Chamærops humilis*, which once grew wild near Villefranche, but has been extirpated by the avidity of collectors—and the common myrtle, everywhere forming a large part of the underwood—the Cretan brake is one of the survivors of the Miocene and Pleiocene epochs. It has lived through the glacier period, although now it exists only in localities very much sheltered and protected from the cold. But this fact does not indicate that at one time it was endowed with a degree of hardiness which it does not now possess; for a severe universal cold is not a necessary consequence of glaciers, and during the glacial period the climate in some places may have been quite as mild as that of the localities which it now frequents. It is an interesting thought that we behold in this tender and delicate fern a representative of the vegetable life that was in existence before the formation of the enormous conglomerate strata of the Riviera—the old sea-beaches of the Mediterranean—and that has survived all the marvellous cosmical changes connected with the upheaval of these strata, and the excavation by the slow process of torrential denudation of the vallons in them, in whose deepest recesses the fern now delights to hide itself.

How long the Vallon des Étoiles is I do not know. I penetrated more than a quarter of a mile into it but saw no indication of an end. The vista that stretched beyond the point where I stopped was another quarter of a mile in length, and the walls seemed to meet in the distance. The cylindrical basin, which forms the usual *cul de sac* of a blind vallon, must have been farther away still. But whether the vallon terminates in that way, or opens up at the other end into a wider valley, I have never met anyone who could inform me. I think I went as far as any explorer; and certainly it was a curious sensation to push through this narrow rift, over masses of conglomerate that had fallen from the top, and wade through the pools of water and soft mud left by the last flood. The silence was broken only by the sound of the petrifying drops of water along the sides, or of a small avalanche of stones loosened from the top by the foot of some stray goat or sheep—suggesting that the adventure was a kind of running the gauntlet. And the loneliness down at this depth in the bowels of the earth, isolated from one's fellow-creatures, and shut out from the upper world of light and life, was oppressive as that of a catacomb.

Over the high ridge of the Genestiera hills, called Serre Long, beyond this vallon, is an exquisite road, which commands splendid views of the valley of the Var, with its bare, strange-looking river channel, half a mile broad, and the towering crag of St. Jeannet beyond, and the snowy peaks of the nearer Alps. At the village of Colomas the road descends by the magnificent bastion of the rock "Garbière" to the Vallon de Roghe, which is entered through two natural rock tunnels, exceedingly curious and picturesque, where, after a storm, there is often a considerable

quantity of water. Here there are several small waterfalls, which are almost unknown in the neighbourhood of Nice; and all the vegetation, through the scent of perpetual moisture, exhibits a wonderful luxuriance and beauty, while primroses and irises remind the visitor of the sweet woodland nooks around his own northern home.

In the immediate vicinity of Nice there are some very interesting vallons, which are not characterised by the savage wildness of those already mentioned, but are rather quiet dells, which have a grace and beauty all their own. Among these may be mentioned the charming ravine commonly known among the English as the Moss Valley, from the quantity and variety of mosses found therein; and another opening off it, which has received the name of Lycopod Valley, owing to the banks being covered with long creeping sprays of the lovely *Lycopodium denticulatum*, whose colour varies according to the exposure and age of the plant, from the most delicate green to the most vivid scarlet. Returning homewards from the vallons, you pass down the bed of the Mantega torrent, which in dry weather is used as a country road. On your right is a curious cavern in the rock, which in winter is the resort of multitudes of bats, and from which issues a pure pellucid stream, whose temperature increases the farther you penetrate into the cave. The warmth of these vallons is such as to nourish a rich undergrowth of evergreen oaks, laurustinus, ivy, cistus, coronilla and myrtle, which gives them, even in the depth of January, the appearance of summer. From the Mantega valley you come out upon the Russian Memorial Chapel. Close at hand is the house where Alphonse Karr once lived and established his model farm, for the purpose of teaching the Niçois the art of cultivating vegetables and flowers for the home and foreign market—an art which has since grown to gigantic proportions, constituting the principal trade of Nice. Farther to the north there is the pleasant valley, below St. Salvador, in which the large and beautiful clear stream of the Fontaine du Temple gushes forth from an old Roman-arched reservoir. It has romantic associations connected with the days of the Saracens and the Knights Templars, and the other older times when the Romans inhabited the neighbouring city of Cemenelum, and introduced into these quiet shades the sports of the amphitheatre and the gaieties of the civilised world. But its waters are now converted to very prosaic uses, being conducted along a canal to irrigate the fields and to work several olive-mills. Not far off is another spring—the Fontaine Mouraille—picturesquely situated at the head of one of the vallons leading down from Mont Chauve. It is called the Wishing-Well, because it is said that if a young lady drinks the water handed to her by a young gentleman three times, forming in her own mind a wish between each draught, her wishes will be realised. Probably this superstition is a survival of the primitive worship that was paid at this well, in common with other wells, by the aboriginal inhabitants, long before the Romans came and swept away all traces of their life.

Nearer the town is the low-lying Vallon des Fleurs, a quiet dell hemmed in by the hills near Cimiez; and leading off it, the Vallon des Hepaticas, which is a narrow channel between low banks—like a Devonshire lane—covered with ilex and elm-trees, and made almost inpenetrable by a luxuriant growth of brambles. These vallons have received their names from the abundance of wild flowers, hepaticas, anemones, narcissi, and tulips that once grew in them. Murray long ago called the neighbourhood of Nice the "land of wild flowers." But this description hardly applies to it now. The extension of the town, the cutting down of the olive-woods, and construction of new roads, and the more improved cultivation, and consequent increased value of the soil, have led to the extermination of many species. Other causes are also at work, such as the wholesale way in which the flowers are gathered and sold in the market and in the streets of Nice, rendering their seeding impossible, many of them being dug up by the roots; the exportation of the finer kinds to this and other countries during winter and spring in boxes, for which the postal arrangements afford special facilities, and, perhaps more than all, the practice, at the *bataille des fleurs* during the Carnival, of throwing bouquets of flowers at one another by the upper classes, from a long double line of carriages moving slowly along the Promenade des Anglais and the Quai des Ponchettes—a practice necessitating a prodigious supply of flowers each year, and, therefore, although eminently romantic and delightful in itself, to be condemned on account of the fatal floral waste which it involves. The scarlet anemone is now not often met with; the dwarf blue iris is very scarce; and the beautiful hay-scented cheilanthes fern has almost entirely disappeared, although it, too, like the Cretan brake, survived the glacial period. One sees only an occasional specimen of sweet-scented narcissus in spring; and the sight of the elegant lady-tulip, with its broad pink-band running down the outside of its elegant creamy cup, and shining through, filling the interior with a rich, soft glow, is enough to give one a thrill of delight. Even the common gladiolus, which used to be conspicuous in every field by its tall spike of magenta blossoms, has to a large extent been weeded out. So also has the Neapolitan garlic, which grew in such profusion at one time that its blossoms whitened the ground. It has not the usual rank smell of the tribe to which it belongs; indeed, its pure white blossoms are almost scentless; but its broken stem emits a peculiarly disagreeable odour of another kind, which, however, can be removed by plunging it into boiling water. And freed from this one drawback, the blossoms, from their exquisite beauty and their abundance, are much used in bouquets and in Easter church decorations. It lingers now in comparatively small quantities on the upland farms. And of all the old floral wealth, the blue hepaticas, purple anemones, and sweet-scented violets are almost the only flowers that adorn the vallons with anything like their former abundance.

Few towns have such lovely environs as Nice; and nothing can be more

refreshing than to get away from the thronged hot public promenades into the quiet shady nooks within easy reach, where, soothed by the tiny tinkle of a rill, and fanned by the dusky foliage of the olive or the ilex, you grow into a placid musing state, in which the gay world, so near and yet so far, is forgotten, and all sorts of dreams regarding fairy realms and old poetic haunts of pastoral Pan flit across the mind. These nooks, to my thinking, constitute the real charm of Nice, and are themselves worthy of a pilgrimage to the sunny South.

VII.

EZA.

PERHAPS the place that most captivates the imagination in the Riviera is Eza. It has a peculiar fascination, a weird interest which causes it to stand out distinctly in all one's memories of that lovely region. There are numerous small towns and villages in the neighbourhood of Nice built upon the tops of isolated hills and rocks, a mode of architecture adopted for the sake of salubrity, the low grounds being formerly unhealthy, and also for the sake of security in troublous times. But more singular than any of them is the human eyrie of Eza. From the highest part of the Corniche Road looking down upon it, from the road along the sea-shore looking up to it, wherever it is visible it presents an extraordinary appearance, clinging to the summit of an isolated cliff, 1,300 feet high, and throwing its castle-like outline sharp and clear against the blue sky. You cannot imagine that arid peak without its village as its appropriate crown, and you cannot think of the village as suitably placed anywhere else.

There is not a fairer scene in the Riviera than the bay at the foot of this eagle's nest, to which a variety of names has been given. It has been called the Bay of the Moors, for on its quiet, sheltered shore stealthy pirates from the Algerian coast used to land on their predatory expeditions. But its most appropriate name is the Mare d'Eza, which the country people fondly give it, for we love to think more of its peaceful associations than of its memories of storm and strife. It is about eight miles east from Nice. The railway passes along its curve, and there is a small station by its side. But the trains are so infrequent, and the passengers who stop here so few, that the deep immemorial quiet of the place is hardly disturbed. Only a suggestion of the great world beyond is brought now and then into the solitude, enough to enhance it and give it a human interest. The great projecting rocks of Pont de Cabéel shut it in on the east, and the perpendicular wall of soft yellow limestone, called Cape Roux, which rises so abruptly from the sea that both road and rail have to pass through it in tunnels, shuts out the view in the west, with the exception of the wild headland and white martello tower of St. Hospice just appear-

ing beyond. Turning the corner of this western ridge of rocks, you pass at once out of a region so exposed to the sun, and so protected from the winds, that it has earned the name of "La Petite Afrique," from its almost tropical warmth, into a cool, soft, shady realm, where the leaves are thick on bough and spray, and the mild airs breathe a balmy breath; an enchanted place, haunted for ever by harmonies of winds and waves. The limpid waters of the Mediterranean here gleam on the white sand in bickering hues of emerald and sapphire, and the little ripples murmur softly as they glide into the embracing arms of the rounded shore. You see in the crystal depths pearly shells, tufts of crimson sea-weeds, and curious marine creatures; while over them, like long-fringed lashes over sparkling eyes, twisted carouba branches, dusky olives, and pale green lemon-trees droop pensively their shadowy foliage, reaching in many places to the water-line.

Along the curve of the bay there is an almost tropical luxuriance of vegetation; and in and out among the roots of the frequent trees runs the soft green verdure of grass and lowly herbage, interspersed with blue gleams of borage and hyacinth and yellow and ruddy flames of jonquils and anemones. Here the botanist may observe a very rare asphodel, the *A. fistulosus*, growing plentifully on the stony slope of the railway embankment within a few yards of the high road. It may be easily known by the pink line on the flower and the hollow stems and leaves. Far above all signs of cultivation rises a grand bold frontage of rocks, some thousand feet in height, whose arid desolation contrasts strikingly with the rich foliage at their foot. But heaven has clothed them with its own soft hues—pearly greys, and richly varied shades of red, purple and yellow—so that they have a bloom of beauty, which, with their own broken and picturesque outlines, constitutes a picture upon which the eye is never weary of gazing. In two places the rampart of rock is broken down into deep ravines, clothed half-way up with straggling stunted pines, whose stony bottom, sun-bleached and bare, has lost for a time the rejoicing music and sparkle of the torrent recalled to its native skies. Immediately below the cliffs, the aërial village is hid from view by the rocky rim of the horizon; but at the western end of the bay its isolated rock comes out distinctly from the mass, and the grey clustered roofs at the top, battered and wrinkled with age, are clearly outlined against "the eternal youthfulness of the sky." From below it seems impossible to get up there without wings. On all sides the rock falls away so precipitously that it would be difficult for a goat, or mountain-cat, to find footing on its ledges and crevices, Immediately overhead a tremendous cliff, tawny and streaked with long dark lines, left by trickling rains and mural vegetation temporarily nourished by them, confronts you without a break on its perpendicular face. But at its foot there is a gradual slope extending down to the road, formed by the *débris* of its slow wasting through untold ages, covered with pine-wood. Here a zig-zag path has been made, which takes you up to a nick or hollow that winds between the

precipitous rocks for about a quarter of the distance, from whence the rest of the way is easy.

You begin the ascent opposite the railway station, in the faith that your path will be revealed to you as you advance, and with a delightful feeling of being bound upon an adventure. At first you linger over the easy and gradual track, as it leads you under fig-trees, putting forth from their twisted ghostly boughs that seem ever to retain the winter rime of their naked state, those tender green leaves which tell that summer is nigh, and-locust trees, with their ash-like keys of pods hanging among their thick varnished foliage; past golden broom, and grey cistus-bushes covered with pink blooms, until you come to the pines, whose strong aromatic fragrance is like burning cedar in the hot sunshine, and leave behind the softer vegetation of the shore. Numberless objects attract your attention, quickened and enlarged by the sense of enjoyment. Here you see the huge white silky bags of the procession-caterpillar on the highest branches of the pines; and perhaps you may find the caterpillars themselves moving across the needle-strewn path, one behind the other, forming a long unbroken line, and looking like a thin mottled snake, dragging its slow length along. There myriads of little brown lizards dart about on the warm rocks. A bird, with a strange, robin-like note, thrills the air with its song; and a gorgeous butterfly flits past, with its wide iridescent wings glancing in the sunshine. You pause at the top of the wood to survey the wonderful scenes below; the fringe of varied foliage at the foot of the rocks, the bright mirror of the bay, reflecting every object along the shore with a soft clearness perfectly magical, and far out, the calm sea melting in its blueness of sympathy into the blue heavens; with a few touches of the outer world given by the white sail of a distant ship, and the thin smoke of the village of St. Jean, at the end of the promontory, rising faintly up above the olive-trees. The path hitherto is much exposed to the sun, which beats full upon it with almost tropical heat. From this circumstance, and its short sharp turns and stony surface, it is somewhat toilsome. But at the top of the wood it passes into a romantic hollow between two cliffs, and loses sight of the sea and the shore. Here it is pleasant to rest, among great masses of rock that have fallen down from the gigantic cliff projecting overhead, and enjoy the shade created by clumps of bushy-headed pine, sombre plumes of tall cypresses, and tangled under-wood of myrtle, lentiscus, and yellow euphorbias, matted together by the creeping stems and spotted sagittate leaves of the wild thorny sarsaparilla.

Emerging from this dim haunt, where even the hottest noon preserves a core of coolness, the path rounds the corner, and is formed along the steep slope of the eastern ravine. Here the scenery is exceedingly romantic, the rocks on either side rising up precipitously to a great height, with pine-trees growing in their crevices and along their crests. At the head of the ravine there is a charming nook, where some rich soil has accumulated, which is laid out in uneven little patches like hanging

Photo, Giletta, Nice.

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shelves, requiring the most careful keeping in repair of their low walls, lest the soil should be washed away by the rains. The vivid greenness of the early wheat in these patches, and the bean-stalks in full bloom, formed a refreshing contrast to the naked glare of the white rocks around. The cultivated soil attracted many bright weeds rich in colouring—tufts of sweet-scented violets, gorgeous poppies, crimson gladiolus, pearly white stars of Bethlehem, and other plants of the asphodel tribe. The boughs of the almond and nectarine trees were still covered with the exquisite pink blossoms, acquiring a deeper blush from the background of the sea-green foliage of the olives. A rough picturesque farm-house, round which all this cultivated beauty gathered, imparted a human interest to the oasis in the wilderness.

Dry and barren as the rocks by the wayside appeared, the botanist could gather a rich harvest among them. Their shady recesses were often adorned with cushions of green moss embroidered with rosettes of beautiful and rare lichens, grey-green *Squamaria crassa* with flesh-coloured shields, and primrose-coloured *Placodium fulgens* with orange fruit. Ferns grow in profusion in the crevices; our own maidenhair spleenwort, which is found almost everywhere, the scaly ceterach, the common polypody, the loveliest little tufts of tender wall-rue spleenwort imaginable with much-divided fronds, and the greatest prize of all, Petrarch's spleenwort, which shyly hid itself in the most secret crannies, and strove to pass itself off as the common maidenhair species—which it much resembles superficially. The *Asplenium Petrarchæ* is now one of the rarest ferns of the Riviera, whereas it used to be one of the most abundant. In the eastern and western ravines of Eza it formerly grew in great abundance; but the walking parties organised by the late Mr. Copland, of Nice, about thirty-five years ago, and the numerous visitors since, have nearly extirpated it. Some tufts may still be found on the grotesque rocks of Mont Vinaigrier, and on the highest cliffs of Mont Boron facing the town of Nice. It is a very pretty fern, with a thicker habit than its near ally, the *A. trichomanes*, and a richer mass of brown fructification at the back. It mostly grows in small dense tufts; but the specimens on the rocks of Eza have long and slender fronds, and grow out of deep crevices, from which it is almost impossible to extract the roots. It is very interesting for its own sake, and still more for the sake of the classic name it bears, which is associated with this neighbourhood; for Petrarch must have traversed the Corniche road on his way to Avignon and the fountain of Vaucluse. The white drooping star of the *Leucoium Nicæense*, with its rich orange stamens, looking like a snowdrop touched with a live coal from off the altar of summer—a flower found nowhere else in the world, except in the narrow strip of ground between Eza and Nice—gave the interest of its own rarity and beauty to the spots which it haunted. While here and there the round leaves of the pennywort, as fresh and succulent as on our own sea-side walls and rocks, adorned the weatherworn stones, and braved the scorching drought and heat.

Ascending the slope of the ravine to the neck of land at its highest point,

connecting the rock of Eza with the rocks to the east of it, there is here a wide open space, with natural benches shaded by trees and bushes, inviting to repose and enjoyment of the view. High above, the cliffs of Eza appear on the sky-line, with the ramparts and houses of the village, brown with age and shaggy with masses of pellitory and the luxuriant African Ivy, standing out in relief against the glowing noonday sky. The confused masses of rock on either side of the path here are painted with frescoes of the most brilliant lichens—olive, yellow, brown, and the brightest orange. I never saw before such vivid hues in this class of vegetation. The yellow wall parmelia, which glorifies the poor man's cottage and haloes with its sunset hue the crumbling ruin at home, here becomes almost scarlet in the dazzling sunshine. It was a feast of colour, confused and varied, like a glorified painter's palette. It seemed as if here were prepared the tints with which nature adorned her later productions—the flowers and the trees.

At the foot of the final ascent, where the path from the shore joins the path from the Corniche road, there is a copious fountain; and here there was a picturesque group of peasant women from Eza, filling their vessels and washing their clothes. The bright sparkle of the fountain, the sound of the falling water, and the charmed circle of emerald verdure and foliage around it, were most delightful amid the white arid rocks of the spot. All the water used for domestic purposes has to be carried up to Eza from this fountain, an ascent of about 500 feet. The labour involved in this is so great, that we do not wonder the village is being gradually abandoned, and the population diminishing seriously. The conditions of life are too hard at that elevation to be long submitted to; and the necessity for living in such places no longer exists. The towns in the neighbourhood have grown recently to such a size and importance that they powerfully attract the dwellers in the hill villages, who gladly abandon their laborious ways for easier modes of living.

Coming close up to the rocks on which the houses of the village are built, they present a very imposing frontage. Great clusters of campanulas hang from all the ledges, mixed with tufts of common polypody, giving to the rocks a peculiar home-like appearance. The fern, indeed, is the British species; but the campanula—*C. macrorhiza*—though closely resembling the slender bluebell, that springs elastic from the airy tread of the Scottish maiden on the Highland bank, is not the same. It has more luxuriant foliage, its colour is of a deeper and more purplish blue, and its corolla is wider in the mouth and flatter in the shape—a peculiarity which belongs to all the Italian campanulas, and distinguishes them from all others—while its roots are larger and thicker. Still, in spite of these differences, it is so like our own familiar flower, that it awoke a thrill of pleasant recognition in my heart, and gathered to itself a host of tender memories of far-off scenes. It seemed strange to see a flower which one is accustomed to connect with the beginning of autumn, blooming in fresh beauty at the beginning of March.

On the rocks beside the bluebell clusters was another fair sight, of a far humbler character, which struck me greatly. Amid the wealth of rich and varied colouring caused by the growth of lichens, one species spreads in large patches of a bright pink hue. Indeed, the whole surface of the rock is incarnadined with this lichen, whose colour is almost unique in this class of plants. It is called *Verrucaria calciseda*, variety purpurascens, and is found, though exceedingly rare, on calcareous rocks in one or two localities in England. In the neighbourhood of Nice it is frequent and characteristic, giving a pink hue to the limestone bluff of St. Jeannet, the rocks of the Deserted Village, the promontory of St. Hospice, and the cliffs of Mont Boron. There is one very remarkable peculiarity about it. The fructification, which consists of little round black dots smaller than the smallest pinhead, lies in minute nests or cavities, which these dots have worked out in the hard rock. Many of the sockets were empty, the fructification having ripened and scattered its microscopic seeds; and the surface of the rock under a magnifying-glass had the appearance of a skin pitted by the small-pox. It was a most suggestive problem how long the little black dots had taken to honeycomb the hard Jurassic limestone, upon which my chisel could only with the utmost difficulty make an impression. What could be weaker and more impassive than these microscopic dots of tender cellular tissue? And yet by the sheer force and infinite patience of life, though reduced to its humblest form, the flinty rock is bored at last.

Passing under an old archway in the wall—whose moulding is made more beautiful and picturesque by the largest unbroken mass of polypody fronds I ever saw, wreathing it completely round with nature's own carving—you enter the village. The street is rough but well paved, with an ornamental band of red bricks running up the centre. It is very steep, and the houses on either side have all the quaint picturesqueness of a mediæval town. Some of them must be very old, their foundations, if not indeed most of their superstructures, dating from Saracenic times. They are solidly built, and all the floors and doorways are arched with stone. Curious were the glimpses into shady corners and queer old staircases which one obtained in passing by. Centuries have passed over these houses without any change. Here and there the ancient and the modern times were incongruously brought together, by seeing on a grotesque old gable of the age of the Crusades the gaudy tin ticket of some French fire insurance company—a work of supererogation one would think, for nothing in these solid stone houses could burn. Here n old woman sits on a doorstep, so very old and torpid that she does not notice you, her poor faded dress in keeping with her own venerable appearance, and the aged, grimy stones around; there you come suddenly upon that commonest of all pictures of human life, yet always fresh to eye and heart, the sweet Madonna face, wearing the loveliest of all expressions, gazing down at the babe in her lap. A few steps farther on a child looks at you for a moment from an archway, and, like a startled

fawn, disappears into the shadows within; while a dog persistently follows you, and resents your intrusion with his loud barking. But beyond these there are no other signs of life in the place. The inhabitants are enjoying their noonday *siesta* or are absent at the fountain at the foot of the rock, or in the fields around it. An *eerie* sensation comes over you. You feel so lonely, so isolated, so far above the world, so remote from the scenes of your ordinary life. Any kind of adventure in such a place might seem possible. Dark tales of Moorish times haunt the imagination, and you feel that the people of the place are the descendants of those who used to come down from their eyrie, and, like birds of prey, ravage the surrounding coasts and commit all kinds of cruelty. At last you get above the houses, and lose the stifling feeling of being confined between their narrow walls, upon the naked platform that crowns the highest point of the rock. Here there are some fragments of an ancient castle, said to have been founded by the Saracens in 814. These consist of a portion of a vaulted roof and a high wall, with a huge hole in the masonry, giving it the appearance of an arch. The floor is formed of the naked rock, which here has been artificially levelled. Altogether the relics are remarkably picturesque, and are associated with a very stirring period in the history of the Riviera.

Eza is supposed to be the Arisium of Antonine's Itinerary. After the downfall of the Roman Empire the Lombards held possession of it for more than two hundred years. At the close of this period the Saracens assailed the towns of the Ligurian littoral; and in order to oppose successfully this terrible enemy, these towns banded together and placed themselves under the protectorate of Genoa in 729. Charlemagne also afforded them substantial help; and during his time the Saracens were unable to effect a landing upon any part of these shores. But no sooner was the great emperor dead than the pirates mustered their forces, and seized and held, one after the other, the best positions in Provence. They soon became masters of the whole region, strengthened themselves on the mountains around Monaco, at St. Agnes and Turbia, and built the castle of Eza, and the fortress of Fraxinet beyond St. Raphaël. From these strongholds they issued forth from time to time, pillaging the whole country, harassing the inhabitants, and burning the towns. From Nice to Albenga was one scene of ruin and desolation. This Saracenic invasion powerfully affected the imagination of the inhabitants of Provence, and furnished them with subjects for romantic ballads, slight traces of which still remain. It was the golden age of Haroun Al Raschid and his successors, when Moorish art and literature had reached their highest point of excellence; but so great was the hatred of the Provençals to their Moslem invaders, that beyond a few words of Arabic origin introduced into their language, they derived no benefit from the enforced association. So turbulent were the times, the only breathing space being an armed truce between the Christian and the Moor, that only hasty and broken reflections of the national mind could be thrown upon the agitated surface of life. These reflections were

mirrored in the romances which were the special product of the period. When these storms passed away, and men had some security for their lives and possessions, and had some leisure to cultivate the arts of peace, the drama, which is the legitimate offspring of calm and settled conditions of life, reflected on its serene bosom the pictures of peace.

It was not till 980 that the Saracens were driven from Provence by the first Viscount of Marseilles and Count of Arles. He took the fortress of the Great Fraxinet and Eza and razed them to the ground, and drove the Moors from stronghold to stronghold, until at last they were finally expelled from the country. In these exploits one Giballin Grimaldi, a noble of Genoese origin, took a prominent part, his brilliant services being rewarded by the possession of the territory of Monaco, which his descendants have continued to hold as an independent principality ever since. A long period of obscurity followed the expulsion of the Saracens. The Counts of Provence left almost no record of their rule behind. We do not hear of Eza again till the year 1303, when Charles of Anjou acquired it, along with Monaco and Turbia, by purchase, and converted it into a fief in favour of Nicholas Spinola, a member of one of the great Genoese houses, who paid him a small rent for it. These were the days of bitter strife between the Guelphs and Ghibellines. During a lull in the civil war, the Guelphs, who had been driven out of Genoa, were allowed to return, and take back their confiscated possessions; while those of them who did not wish to settle under the direct eye of a Ghibelline ruler were left free to establish themselves at Nice, Turbia, and Eza, without being subject to any tax or the payment of any tribute. But this truce did not long continue. The proud, tyrannical conduct of the Spinolas aroused once more the slumbering hatred between the Guelphs and Ghibellines, and all the horrors of a civil war began anew. The cause of the Guelphs triumphed, and the Spinolas were driven from the Riviera; and Nice, Turbia, and Eza reverted once more to the Counts of Provence, and after them to the Angevin sovereigns of Naples. It is a pleasant thought, amid these times of strife and barbarous discord, that two troubadours, Blacas and his son Blaccaset, were lords of Eza, and wrote some beautiful poems there which Raymond has preserved, before the *langue d'oc* of the knightly singers disappeared as a means of poetic utterance, and became degenerated into a common patois. At the end of the fourteenth century Eza was sold, along with the other territories around Nice, by Ladislaus to Amadeus VII. of Savoy, in whose family it remained, with the exception of a short period of twenty-two years during the French Revolution, down to its cession to France in 1860, as one of the results of the Italian war. Isolated as is the position of Eza, it has thus passed through many vicissitudes. Ligurians, Romans, Lombards, Saracens, Genoese, Italians, French have successively owned it. And the creeds which its people have professed have been as varied as their civil history. The nature-worship of the primitive Ligurians gave place to the paganism

of Rome and Egypt; this was supplanted by the Christian faith, which in its turn was uprooted by the Moslem; and finally the Crescent was superseded by the Cross.

The fragment of the vaulted roof belonging to the ancient Moorish castle, still retaining its smooth plastered surface and crimson fresco from Saracenic times, affords a grateful shade from the noonday sun, which on this exposed plateau beats down with unmitigated heat. It must be somewhat trying to live upon this barren rock, exposed to the alternations of heat and cold, without any tree or bush to modify the temperature. The people have perceptibly a more swarthy complexion than those of the surrounding district, though how much is due to the effect of exposure to the weather, or to the admixture of Saracenic blood, it would be difficult to say. There is hardly any vegetation on the top, with the exception of some tufts of grey rosemary, and tall stems of lilac mallows springing from the crevices of the rock. The view is not so extensive as might have been expected from such an elevated position. It embraces but a small part of the coast in front, and at the back is shut in by the lofty ridge of Mont Roux. Nevertheless it presents a charming marine landscape, on which the effects of light and shade are continually changing. Eza, though such a remarkable object when it is in the focus of your vision, is usually hid among the surrounding rocks, which are higher than itself, and hence is disadvantageously situated for a full view of the coast; while the inland view is especially confined. It is simply that of a long slope between two walls of rock, richly cultivated in terraces, and clothed with olive and almond trees, climbing up to the highest part of the Corniche road, and finally ending in bare grey stony peaks. A stream runs down this slope in a series of small pools and waterfalls, and a capital road, fit for carriages, leads up beneath the deep shadow of aged olives to the Corniche road.

This hollow behind Eza, which must have taken long ages to scoop out by the incessant wearing of the drop upon the stone, is a beautiful oasis amid the white burning rocks around. It contains the fields which the inhabitants laboriously cultivate, and upon the produce of which they subsist. The pastoral life of ancient Greece might be reproduced among these olive-groves, for hardly anything has been changed by the intervening centuries, and the objects of nature and the modes of life belong to the old classical world and not to the mechanical civilisation of the West. Pan might still be worshipped here, and the white shape of faun or dryad, glancing among the trees, would be no unexpected sight. But such dreams of the world's youth are put to flight by the stern faith of the world's older and wiser years. A church with a fine campanile occupies a level plateau below the castle, from which the rock descends in a steep escarpment, and not only completes the picturesque appearance of the place, but dominates the whole character of the scene. Under its shadow the heart turns away from the outward beauty of nature to the higher inner beauty of self-sacrifice; and the simple natural earth becomes at once the vestibule of heaven. The site of the church has been held sacred from a remote

antiquity. We know not what altar of a primitive faith smoked here in the dim ages when the Ligurians built their huts upon the rock, long before the Phocæans came and introduced their arts and their religion among a conquered people. But after the Greeks came the Romans; and when they domesticated all the idols of the earth at the Capitol, they brought to this remote spot the worship of the Egyptian goddess, Isis, and erected in her honour the temple, which is supposed, with much probability, to have given its name of Eza to the village.

No more appropriate situation for such a worship could anywhere be found. On such a lofty vantage ground, with such a grand outlook, with nothing but the primitive elements of sea and rock and sky around, the veil of Isis might well have been lifted off her countenance, and a clearer revelation given of the mystery of the world. It might seem as if the living spirit of the universe manifested itself in the glorious scenic apocalypse for ever visible on that height, to the eye and the soul. In the vast Egyptian plains the passivity and sameness of nature might form an impenetrable veil to hide her face; but here in this upper western air, the quick play of light and shade, the incessant motion of the winds and the waves, the ever-changing hues and forms of the landscape, might seem like so many smiles and thoughts of her inner nature—so many glimpses of her heart. But whether the Isis worship satisfied the spiritual craving of the people or not, it was ere long abondoned, and the ruins of its temple cumbered the spot, until converts from Phrygia and other parts of Asia Minor—the region from which the Isis worship had been introduced by the Romans—began to propagate the Christian faith in the Jewish settlements that had been formed along the shores of Provence. A Christian church has been in Eza from a very early period. The present building is only the renovation of a much older one. On either side of the principal door are stones, with carvings and inscriptions, that belonged to the original pagan temple. It once possessed two pictures given by the famous painter David to the Cure of Eza who had been very kind to him while seeking shelter here in a storm on his way to Italy. But the pictures were mutilated by some unscrupulous collector, and ultimately were carried away.

VIII.

TURBIA, MONACO, AND MONTE CARLO.

THE Corniche is one of the most famous roads in Europe. Originally its dangers were more talked about than its beauties. It was carried along the edge of precipices and promontories that plunged sheer down into the sea, and was so steep and narrow that only a mule could pass along the track. To Dante, who traversed this route on his sad, lonely way, as an exile to the north side of the Alps, it suggested an image of the road out of Purgatory. Exposed to the full blaze of the sun, and passing over crumbling and slippery limestone rock, now rising to giddy heights and then sinking into deep gorges, no better image of the ascent from the Purgatorial sea could have been devised; and it was an image drawn from the poet's own painful experience. Since then a magnificent carriage road has been constructed by the French, commanding from its lofty position the most varied views of the loveliest of sea-coasts. Undoubtedly the portion of road between Nice and Mentone is the finest, and one might almost spend a whole season in going backwards and forwards between these two points without being wearied or satiated, so endless are the beauties of the scenery, so ever-varying are its aspects and outlooks. On one side rise up from profound valleys the rugged spurs and offshoots of the mountains, covered on their lower slopes with a monotonous olive drapery, and crowned on their tops with desolate grey rocks; while on the distant horizon far off appear the long chain of the Maritime Alps, the higher peaks covered with snow, like so many great white thrones dominating all the scene. On the other side, far below, is the wonderfully varied coastline extending to Ventimiglia and Bordighera, with its steep precipices, cultivated terraces, curved bays, and far-projecting promontories, embosomed in a perfect wilderness of olive, pine, carouba, and other greenery. And away out to the southern horizon stretches the vast sapphire plain of the Mediterranean, its farthest line quivering in the golden sunlight, and near the shore its limpid waters shimmering like the neck of a peacock with an iridescent mingling of colours. The rocks that rise here and there on the right side of the road in

Photo, Giletta, Nice.

Turbia.

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castellated ruins are bare and blanched by sun and wind, and softened in their crevices by clusters of tall lilac lavatera, and bushes of the yellow tree-spurge.

After passing the lofty isolated rock of Eza, with its cluster of grey rocks and ruined castle standing out with marvellous distinctness against the deep blue sky, we come a few miles farther on to Turbia. This is a quaint mediæval village astride upon a col or saddle-back between two great limestone peaks, and is famous for its ruined triumphal tower or Trophæa (whence its modern name), erected by Cæsar Augustus to commemorate his victory over the Ligurian tribes whose names are inscribed upon the monument. Only the massive lower part, built with large blocks of stone, is of Roman work; the upper structure, consisting of a mediæval fortress built over the original nucleus, being of inferior masonry with the characteristic Italian cornice. It bears a strong resemblance to the Tour Magna at Nimes. Tennyson in his fine poem on "The Daisy," written at Edinburgh, refers to this mountain fortress, which is a remarkable object in the landscape.

"What Roman strength Turbia show'd
In ruin, by the mountain road;
How like a gem, beneath the city
Of little Monaco, basking, glow'd.

"How richly down the rocky dell
The torrent vineyard streaming fell,
To meet the sun and sunny waters,
That only heaved with a summer swell."

When perfect, the monument must have presented a most imposing appearance —a lofty square tower, with massive Doric pillars at its sides, and surmounted by a colossal statue of Augustus, twenty-two feet high, judging from the size of the head, which was found in the neighbourhood—crowning the most elevated point of the old Aurelian Way. Near it is the tremendous projecting precipice of the Tête du Chien guarded by a fort, from the brow of which may be obtained the most extensive and uninterrupted view in the Riviera. Eastward, every inland mountain and coast-town, bay and sunny cape, as far as San Remo, may be seen. Westward, the view is bounded only by the gleaming town of St. Tropez and the faint purple Maure Mountains. The eye is bewildered by the countless objects of interest and beauty that seek to arrest it. The occupants of this Roman outpost could, therefore, command in vision the greater part of the Riviera; and the Roman tower could be seen from the most distant points of one of the most extensive horizons in all the imperial dominions. The name Tête du Chien is a corruption for Tête du Camp, preserving the memory of the headquarters of Cæsar's legions here after the conquest of Gaul.

For seventeen hundred years this striking tower remained nearly intact on its splendid site. But the French, regarding it as a fortification, destroyed it at the same time as the Castle of Nice. Only one-half of it is now standing, as if it had

been cleft through the middle, leaving the massive binding-stones of the lower part, and the rough masonry of the interior upper part, exposed. But notwithstanding this dilapidation, it looks still so solid and substantial that it may survive for many centuries to come. The marbles that had decorated the exterior were carried away by the Genoese; a head of Drusus, dug out of the ruins, is preserved in the Museum at Copenhagen; with the massive stones of the trophy the gateways of the village have been built; and many fragments of the sculptures and inscriptions may be seen in the walls of the houses. Poor and forsaken on its lonely mountain height as Turbia now looks, remote from the great world, it is said to have given birth to no less than two Roman Emperors, Vitellius and Pertinax. Dante mentions it in his "Purgatorio," and doubtless the great Florentine stood beside its tower in musing mood. Its narrow streets, old houses, courts and gateways, set in a cincture of grey barren rocks, with an avenue of shady elms relieving the desolation, takes one back into a hoary realm of antiquity as different as possible from the modern every-day world in which one lives. It may be mentioned that the Tête du Chien being a fortified place, cannot be approached without special permission; and no one is allowed to make a sketch of the brow of the hill with its fortifications.

From Turbia a very steep and stony path, consisting of a succession of terraced steps, leads down to Monaco. It is much exposed to the sun, and is very trying to the feet, though the extensive view largely compensates for the fatigue. A line of funicular railway now connects the two places. But the carriage-road is much the most convenient of the three routes; and winding round grey castellated rocks, and passing midway along the breast of lofty precipices—crossing deep gorges, and bordered in many places with romantic woods of olive, pine, and locust-trees—it affords a continual succession of the most enchanting pictures. The colouring of the rocks, from deep crimson to a pale lilac, with a soft bloom of weathering and minute mural vegetation upon them, and invested with the burning lights and the cool shadows of the passing hours, is most wonderful. On the ledges and in the crevices of the ruddy and ashen cliffs, where the sun shines hottest, convolvuli unfold their great crimson trumpets, and cistuses shake out the creases of their rose-like blooms; lilac mallows, and scentless mignonette hang down in rich tufts; and the tree-euphorbia, and the evergreen pistachio grow in dense bushes; while the way-side woods, lit up with the golden suns of composite plants, cast a grateful shade, and afford exquisite glimpses of the coast-scenery between their branches. At Roccabruna the charms of the road are focussed into the most varied loveliness. That romantic village climbs up among great masses of brown conglomerate rocks that look as if they had fallen from the steep hill-side overhead, and had been arrested half-way down the slope. Houses and rocks are scarcely distinguishable from one another; and with their confused heaps, out of which narrow streets, dark staircases, vaulted over with arches, binding the houses together, and the great gaunt

ruins of the ancient castle of the Lascaris, crowning the highest point, rise, the olive mingles its dusky foliage, and the lemon its lighter leaves and golden fruits, with fine effect. The ancient church of St. Margaret, in the centre of the village, has a nave and aisles, and is adorned with curious frescoes representing St. Augustine, St. John and St. Louis, of life size. It has also a beautiful statue of Christ, and an old font, both of which are worthy of note. On the wall of the house opposite the church are painted a picture of the Virgin Mary and the armorial bearings of Dominique Calvano, Count of Drap, one of the last bishops of Nice. In one of the lanes of the town is preserved part of a very ancient sarcophagus, on which is the Christian monogram surrounded by twisted flutings. The entrance to the town is by a fortified gateway, through which, passing out to the eastward, you come in a short time, by the road made on a natural terrace commanding an extensive view, to a very quaint little oratory, perched on a rock called the Madone de la Pausa. This ancient sanctuary should be visited for the sake of the interesting fresco of the fifteenth century with which its vault is adorned. It represents a scene in Purgatory, with St. Ursula protecting some girls at prayer with her outstretched mantle from the attacks of demons in hell, and the Virgin receiving the souls of the purified into heaven. The motto carved upon the walls of the castle of Roccabruna is very descriptive of the quiet old town, "The times glide on, and we grow old with the silent years."

Monte Carlo is too well known to need any lengthened description. It is, take it all in all, the most beautiful and fascinating part of the Riviera. Nature and art have done their utmost to enchant the eye and stimulate the imagination. The contrast between the arid, leafless, ashy-grey precipices—seamed and scarred as if by ages of elemental strife—that rise for two thousand feet above it and the rich semi-tropical verdure, which the hot sunshine reflected from them helps to nourish, is most striking. Nature's haggard features heighten in an extraordinary degree the romantic effect of the rich foreign vegetation, the charming lawns, and terraced gardens and carriage drives, which the highest skill and most lavish expense have prepared in this place. The Casino is a large and showy building, whose style of architecture is somewhat fantastic and oriental, and whose gaming and concert-rooms are profusely decorated with gilt ornaments, and with panel-paintings of sports, possessing little artistic merit. On the slope on which the Casino is situated are studded beautiful villas, embosomed among lemon, palm, and olive-trees; and both on the eastern and western sides, as at La Condamine, considerable towns have sprung up, with shops, hotels and restaurants, and all the elegancies of fashionable life.

The isolated promontory of Monaco, rising precipitously all round, about 300 feet above the sea, has been inhabited from the remotest antiquity. It is one of the most interesting spots to the student of history; for it was on this rock that Greek civilisation first established itself in Western Europe. Originally it bore the name

of Portus Herculis Monæci, from Hercules, who is supposed to have gained a great victory over the native tribes in this place. On the grey rocky plateau on the summit of Mount Agel, the highest mountain above Monaco, are massive ruins of a Pelasgic or Cyclopean character; and these are said by tradition to have belonged to the primitive city, which was built there and not on the promontory on the sea-shore. At an early date the mountain fortress of the mythological explorer was transferred to the place which it now occupies; and its Greek name, *Monoikos*, signifying an isolated home, is exceedingly descriptive of its situation. At the dawn of history we find Hecatæus of Miletus, who lived five hundred years before Christ, mentioning it as one of the chief towns of Liguria. Virgil and Strabo both allude to it; and during the Carthaginian war its inhabitants took the side of Hannibal against the Romans, and afterwards of Cæsar against Pompey. Scipio Africanus put into this port on his way to Spain. During the persecution of the Christians by Diocletian, a young Corsican maiden, named Devote, was put to death, and her body was carried in a boat to Monaco, where it was interred, and an oratory and a bronze statue afterwards erected to her memory. St. Devote became the patron saint of the place; and her fête, on the 27th January, is observed every year with great ceremony. After the downfall of the Roman Empire and the death of Charlemagne, the Saracens took possession of Monaco, and held it continuously till the tenth century, when they were expelled by the Count of Arles. The town was then ceded to the Republic of Genoa, by which the present fortifications and the foundations of the castle were constructed. In the fourteenth century it was united under one Government with Roccabruna and Mentone, which were purchased by Charles Grimaldi, the great Genoese general, who thus founded, what up to about thirty years ago was known, as the principality of Monaco. The Grimaldi arms, which are supported on either side by a monk holding a drawn sword, are supposed to have been derived from the seizure by one of the Grimaldis, of the town, in the disguise of a monk, while the Spinolas, who held it, were attending mass on Christmas Eve. The Grimaldis, an intensely vital race, have had a very stormy history. They furnished four admirals to France. They gave to Genoa eleven doges; one captain-general to Florence; and one chief grandee to Spain. Antonio, who died in 1731, was the last of the warlike males. His daughter having married a Frenchman, Thorigny, a relation of the Talleyrands, the race has been continued ever since in the female line. The present Prince of Monaco is an accomplished and enthusiastic scientist, and has helped by his yachting and dredging expeditions to increase largely our knowledge of the fauna of the Mediterranean and other seas.

The principality of Monaco, now separated from Roccabruna and Mentone is the smallest in the world. It is a marvel that through all the political changes of recent years in the map of Europe it has preserved its independence; although it narrowly escaped annexation at the Congress of Vienna, and was saved only, it is

Hôtel Métropole, Monte Carlo.

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said, by a bribe given to Talleyrand. The principality is little more than three miles in length and one in breadth; and for four or five centuries it was a very poor place, where the prince and his subjects derived a meagre subsistence from their vineyards and olive-woods and patches of corn, cultivated with much toil on the scanty soil of the mountain slopes around. The poverty of the people was still further increased by the cruel and petty exactions of a succession of tyrannical princes, who made every industry of the place a State monopoly. But all this was altered in 1862, when M. Blanc transferred his gambling establishment from Homburg to the table-land of the Spelugues, which, being interpreted from the Monegasque patois, means appropriately the Plain of the Robbers, and which afterwards received the world-famous name of Monte Carlo from Charles III., the recent blind Prince of Monaco. The history of the place has thus been appropriately continuous. It began its career as a pirate city or robber-hold; it exercised the right to exact toll from vessels passing the port down to the close of the eighteenth century; and now it carries on its old business of pillage in a manner consistent with modern ways. It has all along strikingly fulfilled the grim popular saying—

"Son Monaco sopra uno scoglio,
Non semino e non raccoglio,
Eppur Mangiar voglio!"

From the enormous revenue derived from the gambling institution the State expenses of the principality are paid, and the inhabitants are, in consequence, exempted from taxes and duties of every kind. Money has been lavished with a prodigal hand on all sides, so that in this small region are concentrated the utmost luxury and splendour. But putting aside all objections on the score of morality, it hardly admits of question that strangers, and not the true Monegasques, have benefited most by this vast expenditure. The cost of living has been enormously increased, habits of luxury and idleness have been fostered, while the means of obtaining an honest livelihood are not greater than they used to be. Add to these drawbacks the demoralising influence of the presence of such an institution and the kind of society which it brings, and it must be allowed by every right-thinking person that the people of Monaco pay dearly for whatever immunities they enjoy. The question of the abolition of the Casino is keenly argued at the present time; and popular opinion is daily gaining in favour of the removal of this plague-spot, this "paradis du Diable," as it has been justly called, from the loveliest headland in all the Riviera. The lately published squib, "The Fall of Prince Florestan," treats the matter in a light but forcible style. The horrible tales connected with the gambling institution here are, indeed, like the skeleton at the banquet-table.

The town of Monaco is in itself, as well as in its unique situation, exceedingly romantic. The original approach was by a steep flight of steps, defended by

frowning battlements and strongly fortified gates; but now there is a road which ascends to the town on the east side by a long and easy incline. The battlements of the old towers are bifurcated in a very curious fashion, like two horns united at the base, and little turrets hang out at every corner. The gaily-coloured houses bask in the warm sun-glow; and the dark tresses of cypresses and palm-trees in the palace gardens are clearly defined against a sky of the most intense blue. The ledges are in many places covered with dense masses of the prickly pear, among which the mesembryanthemum wreathes the rocks with its superb masses of green foliage and dazzling flowers. Aloes hang their gorgeous scarlet blossoms over the parapets, and tropical plants, that with us need the shelter of a hot-house, grow freely in the open air in the depth of winter. Such is the brilliancy of the light and the purity of the air that the sides of the exposed rocks gleam with the most beautiful and vivid hues. There is not much to interest the visitor in the town, which consists of three parallel streets, beyond one or two dark old churches, and the vast palace, which occupies the entire landward side of the "Place," consisting of a picturesque group of buildings of different styles and dates. On the right-hand side of the court are some fine frescoes by Caravaggio, representing a triumphal procession of Bacchus, which have been recently restored. A wide marble double staircase, connected with the tragical murder of Bartolomeo Doria by his nephew, the lord of Dolceacqua, in 1523, leads up to a beautiful gallery painted in fresco by Carloni, representing the feats of Hercules. Several of the apartments are magnificently decorated, especially the one called "La grande salle Grimaldi," whose walls, thirty feet in height, and ceiling, are adorned with frescoes by Horace de Ferrari, and which has an enormous chimney-piece, in one solid mass of marble, carved with curious devices, with an inscription upon a scroll in the centre unrolled by two angels, "The man who pretends to know God and does not keep his commandments is a liar." In one of the rooms called the York Chamber, handsomely furnished in crimson satin and gold, the Duke of York, brother of George III. of England, who had been taken ill at sea on his voyage from Toulon to Genoa, and claimed the hospitality of the prince, died; and the broad bed, raised on a platform, curtained and cushioned with heavy damask, on which he breathed his last, is still preserved, and surrounded by a gilded railing. This incident reminds us of another connection of Monaco with English history; how Charles Grimaldi, the only one of this line who rises into historic fame, conveyed from Monaco in his galleys the Genoese bowmen who helped France against Edward III. at the battle of Crécy.

Between Monaco and Mentone, on the lower wooded and uncultivated terraces along the escarpment of the mountain, there are very considerable remains of a prehistoric fort, consisting of large masses of walls, one above another, built of loose stones of great size. On the highest terrace there is a curious quadrangular structure, which looks as if it might be an altar. In the soil enclosed by these remarkable

Photo, Giletta, Nice.

The Principality of Monaco.

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walls have been found fragments of Gallo-Roman pottery, and in one place substructures in which mortar has been used, obviously indicating a much more recent date. On the edge of the stream which forms the little valley of the Gaumates, opening up behind Condamine, is the oratory dedicated to St. Devote, which contained her relics, now transferred to the parish church. Good-Friday used to be commemorated at Monaco in a very singular fashion. A kind of miracle-play, representing all the incidents connected with the Passion of our Lord, including His death and resurrection was performed. This custom used to be universal all along this coast; but it has now disappeared everywhere except at Roccabruna and Mentone. At Mentone it is held on the proper day, and was witnessed by Queen Victoria in 1882. But at Roccabruna the representation takes place on the 5th August every year, which is the fête-day of the local patron saint. There is reason to suppose that this strange spectacle is only a Christianized relic of the death and burial of Adonis, which would be performed on these shores during the Roman occupation, or perhaps of a still older form of sun-worship, which the primitive inhabitants celebrated in the springtime of every year.

IX.

A PILGRIMAGE TO LAGHETTO.

ABOUT thirteen miles north-east of Nice there is one of the most interesting shrines of pilgrimage in the south of Europe. It is comparatively little known to the ordinary tourist from this country, although it has a wide reputation along the shores of the Mediterranean, and yearly attracts multitudes from the surrounding districts. It is situated at the head of a long romantic glen, that runs down in a northerly direction from the hills above Monaco to the Valley of the Paglione, on the high road from Nice to Turin. Its position may be most clearly described, by saying that it is on the north side of the high saddle of rocks over which the Corniche road is carried, while Monaco is on the south side, almost directly opposite.

Where this route attains its greatest elevation, a short distance from the village of Turbia, there is a column standing by the roadside, called the Colonna del Re, having been erected to commemorate the visit of one of the kings of Sardinia. Here a road turns off to the left, and descends northwards for two miles to the sanctuary, which lies in a hollow among the mountains, with the conical hill of Monte Sembola on one side and Monte le Bataille on the other—as secluded, though only a short distance from one of the main lines to Genoa, as though it were in the very heart of the Maritime Alps.

The day of our visit to this famous sanctuary was one of those perfect days—so common in this glorious climate, so rare in ours—that make mere living an enjoyment. The brilliant sunshine and crystalline light brought out with the utmost vividness the colour of every object, and made a picture of the homeliest scene. Through the soft, mild air the far-off distances appeared wonderfully near and distinct. Nothing could be more romantic than the first glimpse we got of Laghetto. On a rocky plateau, rising abruptly out of the deep dell, was a grey monastic pile surmounted by a weather-stained campanile, and clustered round it were a few picturesque-looking houses. The verdure of the olive and pine woods on the slopes, and of the bean and wheat-fields in the depths of the valley, contrasted most

Photo, Giletta, Nice.

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Roquebrune and the Promontory of Cape Martin.

strikingly with the grey and leafless rocks that crowned the heights. It looked like a green oasis set in the heart of a hard stony desert.

Of all quiet places this is surely the quietest. It seems the very Sabbath of nature. A balmy silence steeps the slumbering monastery and the drowsy homes around it, whose walls and roofs have caught the ripened brown and red hues of many vanished summers. Nature here hushes all the babbling voices of the seasons. No sound comes from the little stream that flows far down through the valley; the very breeze itself is stilled; and the pines on the crest of the hill stand unmoved in the sunshine. Only the soft chime of the monastery bells floats in undulating cadence over the scene, investing everything with a magic spell, and completing the enchantment of the place. A sad sentiment of antiquity pervades all the air. Memories of the Romans who used to pass to and fro through the valley, and of stern struggles between the rulers of the world and the native barbaric races contending for hearth and field, haunt the mind. The monastery is a very incrustation of history; and, like Madeline, in the "Eve of St. Agnes," we are apt to fall asleep and dream in the lap of legends old. This peaceful nook is so near to the great world: only a narrow ridge of rock separates it from Monte Carlo, that temple of vice to whose gorgeous shrine all the fashion and worldliness of Europe crowd. It is separated widely, not only by space but by sentiment, from the stirring world of steam and thought whence we came. Here the past seems to be winnowed for us. The barbarous element has vanished; we have the romance without the hardness of fact; we enjoy the best of former ages in unison with the advantages of the present. We can cherish here a poetic faith, a devotion to ideal beauty, which differs widely from superstitious belief and fills up the void left in the mind by the absence of our ordinary worldly avocations.

The origin of the sanctuary of Laghetto is lost in the mists of antiquity. There was a chapel there from time immemorial, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and a number of poor peasants' huts were clustered around it. It was entirely forgotten by the world and abandoned to ruin, when the incident occurred which brought it out of its obscurity, and invested it all at once with a wonderful sanctity. A woman of some position and influence belonging to Monaco, of the name of Hyacinthe Casanova, was attacked, in 1652, by an incurable disease. She thought in her extremity of the little ruined chapel of the Mother of Jesus at Laghetto, and had herself carried to the place; and there for three days she invoked the help of the Virgin, whose intercession on her behalf was so successful that she returned to Monaco perfectly cured. Full of gratitude, she resolved to pay her vows in public at the shrine of her benefactress; and so astonishing was the cure that all the inhabitants of the town accompanied her in her pious pilgrimage. Other miracles were performed on the occasion. Great numbers of persons afflicted with various diseases thereupon came to Laghetto, and went away healed. The reputation of the place spread far and

wide, and in a few months it became the most noted and popular shrine in the south of Europe. In the following year no fewer than thirty-six processions set out from Nice, Mentone and other parts of the Riviera, to visit the altar of Notre-Dame de Laghetto. The former primitive chapel, which had been almost a ruin, was demolished, and on its site was erected the present handsome church. Gifts from all quarters were lavishly bestowed with which to enrich and adorn the shrine. In an astonishingly short space of time the building was finished, and the Bishop of Nice went to consecrate it, accompanied by a large assemblage of priests and upwards of thirty thousand of the inhabitants carrying torches. In the square in front the commune of Nice, in token of gratitude for the great benefits conferred upon the district by the church, erected shortly afterwards a fountain, bearing the following inscription in Latin: "Pilgrim, thou findest here two springs; one descends from Heaven, the other from the mountains. The first is a treasure which the Holy Virgin distributes to the piety of the faithful; the second has been conducted here by the Niçois. Drink of the one and the other, if thou thirstest for both." A copious flow of the purest and coldest water, from some distant source among the mountains, falls incessantly into a deep wide basin with a most soothing sound. How delightful it was, when almost blinded with the glare of white arid rocks baking in the sunshine, without a particle of vegetation, to gaze upon the cool face of that fountain, drink new life and vigour from its overflowing cup, and lave the hot feverish hands through its limpid crystal. It was a baptism of refreshment to all the senses.

The early years of the church were associated with a very sad incident, which helped still further to bring it into notice. During the absence of Honoré II., Prince of Monaco, who was invited to Paris to take part in the festivities connected with the coming of age of the King of France, his only son, the Marquis de Baux, was accidentally shot at the Convent of Carnolis, near Mentone. This promising prince, who was greatly beloved, on account of his many virtues, by all who knew him, went with his wife and children to spend the day at this convent, and while taking part in some amusements in the garden—firing with pistols at a target—the pistol of one of his attendants caught in his shoulder-belt while he was taking it out and went off suddenly, wounding two of the bystanders, and striking the Marquis de Baux in the spine. Everything that could be done for the unfortunate prince was done. He was carried back immediately to Monaco, but, after a night of great suffering, he died the following day, interceding almost with his last breath for his terror-stricken attendant, that he should not be made to suffer in any way for what had been a pure accident. The grief of his father when he heard the dreadful news was, as may be imagined, overpowering. He left Paris immediately, and arrived at home in time to pay the last sad rites to his son. The whole principality shared in the sorrow of the heart-broken father; for the people had looked forward to the succession of the

Photo, Giletta, Nice.

To face p. 108.

Sanctuary of Notre Dame de Laghetto.

young heir as to a period of unusual happiness and prosperity to the little State. The widow was almost crushed by the terrible fate that in a moment had befallen her. The only consolation that could reach her was in connection with the offices of religion. She went constantly to the shrine of Our Lady at Laghetto, to offer her gifts and proffer her prayers for the repose of the soul of her husband. Often in the quiet afternoons, leaving her children behind, and accompanied only by one servant, might she be seen, clad in garments of deepest woe, climbing up the steep height above Monaco, and wending her way over the intervening ridge, on her pathetic errand to the sacred shrine; and for years afterwards the fame of her devotion, and the splendour of her presents drew many pilgrims of sorrow to the same spot.

About twenty years after the church had been finished, a square of monastic buildings was erected around it, which added greatly to the picturesque appearance of the whole structure. In 1675 a number of Carmelite friars were installed in the monastery. Very picturesque these white friars must have looked, with their snowy frocks and dark brown tunics and scapularies, moving about among the quiet scenes of the valley, or going to and fro among the neighbouring villages, carrying their religious ministrations to every castle and cottage. Although the order was not so popular on the Continent as in England, where they had no less than fifty great houses at one time, it possessed in this part of the Riviera a larger amount of influence than any other fraternity, and they invariably used it for good purposes. The fathers have had rather a troubled history. In 1792 the shock of the first French Revolution was felt in this remote solitude. The French army invaded Nice, and the three communes of Monaco, Mentone, and Roccabruna seized the opportunity to plant the tree of liberty in each town, while the inhabitants of Nice signified their wish to be annexed to the French Republic, forming a portion of the 85th Department, under the name of the Maritime Alps. During this stormy period all property belonging to churches, ecclesiastical corporations, convents, and fraternities was confiscated by the nation and kept under its charge. The monastery of Laghetto shared in the fate of the other religious institutions throughout France. The monks were expelled, and the buildings transformed into an hospital, and used some time afterwards by the wounded soldiers of Bonaparte's army, returning from the victories achieved in Italy. Better days, however, succeeded. The First Consul restored the monastery to its original use; and, when Nice and the surrounding country became absorbed as before in the kingdom of Sardinia, the Carmelite friars returned to their cells, and the place resumed its old monastic quiet and seclusion.

The royal house of Savoy had always a great predilection for this retreat. When the church and monastery were finished, the princes sent ex-voto offerings; and later Charles Emanuel, in gratitude for the recovery of his son from a severe illness, presented a bambino of massive gold to the shrine, which may be still be seen there.

An inscription on a column in front of the church records a very romantic incident connected with the House of Savoy. In 1849, ten years before the liberation of Italy, a traveller was seen by the monks, in the afternoon of March 24th, riding slowly down the road that led from Turbia to the monastery, accompanied by a servant also on horseback. His head was bent low, and he seemed greatly dejected. As he drew near they went forth to meet him. They did not know who he was, and they did not like to inquire; but from the dignity of his mien and the richness of his trappings, they were convinced that he was a person of exalted rank. They offered him the hospitality of the monastery. He said he would sleep with them and take some refreshments, but he must first seek the consolations of the confessional. In the morning, after an early breakfast, he departed with his attendant; but hardly was he out of sight when a number of officers rode up and inquired for Charles Albert of Sardinia. The monks thus learned for the first time the real rank of their mysterious guest. He had come straight from the fatal field of Novara, where, in spite of the intrepid courage which he and his two sons displayed, his troops, composed in large measure of raw recruits, and without sufficient confidence in the cause that had brought them together, were early panic stricken, and utterly defeated by the Austrian army. The victories of the Piedmontese soldiers on the Adige, where they had made themselves masters of nearly the whole of Lombardy, were thus by one terrible stroke reversed, and the bright hour of fortune for the Italian nationality was lost, as it seemed, for ever.

The story of the memorable 23rd of March has been often told. When the fortune of battle went against him, Charles Albert exclaimed to General Durando, who led his army, "General, this is my last day; let me die." Later in the day he summoned his officers about him, and declared his intention to resign the crown to the Duke of Savoy, his eldest son; he then bade them farewell, wrote a parting letter to his wife, and made his appearance at the quarters of the Austrian commander, Count Thurn, in the disguise of a count, and being allowed to pass the Austrian lines—his real rank being perfectly well known—he departed in the direction of Nice. Few pictures in history are more touching than that of the gallant King, turning his back upon the bloody field where he had staked and lost all in one last throw, wending his way alone and unknown, utterly sick of life, to this solitary sanctuary among the distant mountains. His personal abilities, his patriotic hopes, the noblest and most unselfish dreams of his life, had gone down in utter darkness, and there was nothing but despair on every side. Who can tell what a night of misery that was, which he spent sleeplessly under the sacred roof, when his groans and sighs were heard by the monks in the neighbouring cells? That was the last night which the unfortunate monarch ever passed upon his native soil. From that fatal day he abdicated his throne, abandoned his country, and died shortly afterwards in Portugal of a broken heart. Could he have foreseen the

bright future for his country that was to rise in ten short years from this terrible ruin, when his gallant son—the never-to-be-forgotten Victor Emanuel—who was consecrated to the task on the field of Novara by a baptism of blood—should reign over an emancipated and united Italy from Venice to Palermo, and the house of Savoy should become one of the foremost powers of Europe, he might well have had faith and patience to endure his misfortunes; but coming events for him did not cast their shadows before. The fervent prayers which he offered up for his country on that sorrowful night were answered far beyond what he had ever anticipated; and the cause of freedom, on whose altar, along with many other precious Italian lives, he was offered up as a victim, in the end gloriously triumphed. The column which commemorates the romantic visit of the King of Sardinia to the place has an additional painful interest connected with it, from the circumstance that it is no longer on Italian soil. The last resting-place of the King in his native land, on his way to exile and death, no longer belongs to his house. It was transferred to the French Government after the peace of Villafranca, along with the whole beautiful province of Nice—a cession which Garibaldi, whose birthplace was in that town, never forgave, and which injured Count Cavour, by whom it was effected, very deeply in the minds of all Italians.

So late as the winter of 1874 the French endeavoured to suppress the monastery of Laghetto, and the buildings were actually put up for sale. No one cared to make such a sacrilegious bargain; and the monks, for a comparatively small sum, which was raised by the contributions of their brethren throughout France and Italy, were allowed to buy back their house. Since then they have been suffered to remain quietly in possession of their retreat. But much of the old prestige of the place is gone. The number of the monks has been greatly reduced. There is an air of decay and neglect about the spot. Round the four sides of the square mass of buildings run the cloisters, whose walls are decorated with thousands of votive offerings. In this place they have taken the shape exclusively of little coloured pictures enclosed in black wooden or gilded frames, representing some terrible accident or grievous disease in which the Virgin of Laghetto interfered for the rescue or recovery of the sufferer.

The rude anatomical pictures of the cloisters were excluded from the walls of the church, and their place was occupied by silver models of hearts, legs, and other parts of the human frame, hung up as memorials of cures effected upon them by the miraculous power of the Madonna. In one corner there was a pyramid of crutches piled one above another, reaching nearly up to the ceiling. They were of all sizes, from a child's to an old man's. Some had seen much service, and had borne their owners a long way down the journey of life; others were comparatively new, and had evidently been worn but a short time. Perhaps no votive offerings were made with greater cordiality than these discarded instruments, for, as they had become super-

fluous to man, heaven might find a use for them. One of the most pathetic things in the pile was a child's steel boot, left here in gratitude when the Virgin had healed the deformity. The interior of the church was very dark and sepulchral, the only light coming from the roof and from some dim lamps that hung suspended from the ceiling. Opposite the chapel there was a room fitted up with a counter and shelves like a shop, containing photographs of the monastery and of the Virgin of Laghetto, and a large assortment of rosaries, where evidently a considerable amount of lucrative business was done during the season.

The great day in the annals of Laghetto is the fête of La Trinità, on May 16th. Lady Day, March 25th, used to be observed with great solemnity; but the festival of La Trinità for more than a century has been set apart for the annual pilgrimage to the shrine. Although of late the fête has been shorn of much of its former grandeur and importance, yet still the number of carriages of every kind, and the thousands of travellers on foot, that crowd almost every inch of the road from Nice and Turbia, and all the mountain paths that lead to the shrine of Our Lady of Laghetto, form a scene that baffles description, and bring back in all its vividness one of the most characteristic incidents of the Middle Ages. The pilgrims usually started from Nice at midnight. A favoured few, so far as there was accommodation for them, were received into the monastery, but thousands had to encamp in the open air during the three days that the fête lasted. But in that dry, mild climate there was no hardship in this; rather was it a pleasant change from their ordinary mode of life. They took provisions with them, and the whole scene assumed the appearance of a gigantic picnic party. They spent the time in gossiping, lounging about, dancing the tarantella, singing the peasant songs as old as the days of the troubadours, and paying their devotions at the shrine. Their prayers, in order to be complete and efficacious, required to be made in nine circuits round the church; and the "Salve Regina" had to be repeated seven times in each circuit. For this meritorious act a thousand years' plenary indulgence was granted. It was announced beforehand that three miraculous cures would be wrought by the interposition of the Virgin on the occasion. But, like the response of the Delphic oracle, there was a grand ambiguity in the announcement, affording very considerable latitude for faith and hope. The priests did not condescend to tell the names of the favoured persons, or the nature of the trouble that would be healed. They left each person in the crowd of afflicted patients who sought the shrine happy in the hope that his or her case would engage the special attention of heaven. And in this respect the ecclesiastics acted with consummate wisdom; for, apart altogether from what might be the curative effect of such a hope held out to each individual, and the beneficial influence of the excitement and novelty of the scene, and the fact that many of the disorders would be nervous and imaginary, and capable of being easily removed by a change of circumstances such as the occasion afforded, they could

safely calculate, according to the law of probabilities, that out of so many hundreds at least three would, in the natural order of things, be restored to health and vigour.

In the dry bed of the principal stream, below the walls of the monastery, we spread our luncheon upon the white pebbles. The arch of a bridge near at hand gave us a charming vista of the rocky mountains beyond; while the precipitous banks opposite were clothed with tender deciduous foliage, in the first fresh greenness of the southern spring. Tall umbrella-pines and cypresses cast down their moveless shadows; the ivy wreathed the rocks around us, in striking contrast with the masses of white hawthorn bloom and the yellow tassels of the coronilla. Beside us, springing from the grassy patches that grew on the margin of the stream, and faithfully preserving, in spite of the heat, the memory of the vanished waters that had once nourished them, there were large tufts of the strange leafless Aphyllanthes, consisting only of flower and stem, as if a bunch of rushes, through long gazing at the heavens, had all at once broken out in sympathy into blue blossoms. Nowhere else in the Riviera, to which and to Australia, on the other side of the world, this class of plant belongs, did I see such singularly beautiful specimens. And as if to complete the picture, a large Judas-tree stood right before us, with crimson ringlets of blossom falling around it from every spray—a perfect feast of colour, transfigured by the brilliant sunshine until it glowed like a shower of rubies. One could lie there like a lizard on a stone, happy in the simple, warm, delightful sense of being amid such scenes of beauty. Unawed by the frowning shadow of the grey pile under which we feasted, we were a merry party. Bubbles of fancy, rainbow-hued, rose up from the fresh fountain of our joy; and our frequent laughter rippled along the dry bed of the stream, and filled it instead of its own forgotten waters. But the afternoon shadows began to deepen around us, and we were warned that it was time to leave. Never can any of us forget the surpassing glory of the homeward journey along the Corniche road. We had passed Tubia, and come in sight of the Mediterranean, when we saw on the horizon a most wonderful vision. The grand serrated mountain ranges of Corsica, flecked with snow, rose out of the bluest of blue seas. Though in reality one hundred and twenty miles distant, they seemed quite near. We saw from our lofty view-point not only the culminating summits of Mounts Cinto, Rotondo, Pagliorba, Padro, and Oro, between eight and nine thousand feet high, but also the coast and intermediate region, which the sphericity of the sea hides below the horizon from a lower standing-point. Not once in a great many years is such a view of the splendid island obtained. Usually a glimpse of it may be got on a very clear day just before the sun rises; but, like a star, it immediately fades in the golden light, and nothing but the monotonous sapphire pavement of the Mediterranean meets the searching eye. It was such a strange and unexpected sight, filling with beauty and grandeur what had before always presented itself to us as empty sea and air, that one could almost believe it to be a creation of one's own imagination, or a Fata Morgana of these

bewitched shores. The slanting sunshine which reddened the rocks around us, and kindled even the dusky smoke of the olive-woods beneath into a warmer glow of life, and softened the shadows on the western Esterels until the substantial mountains melted into transparent purple clouds, lingered on the far-off Corsican peaks, lighting up their snows with alternate silver and crimson fires. It was a sight that held us silent and spell-bound all the way. Only once were we tempted to avert our gaze from it; and that was when, traversing the narrow neck of road beyond Eza, we saw on our right, enthroned on the edge of the vast mountain amphitheatre, the distant stainless crests of the Maritime Alps blending with the deep violet of the heavens. A view that embraced two such transcendent scenes left nothing more to be desired.

X.

MENTONE.

MENTONE is divided into two parts, called the East and West Bays, by the hill, about 130 feet high, on which the old town is built. Behind it rises a richly varied amphitheatre of olive-clad slopes, bounded on the horizon by a series of bare rocky peaks, remarkable for the beauty of their outline. These peaks, called Mount St. Agnes, the Roc d'Ormea, and the Berceau, range in altitude from 3,650 feet to nearly 4,000 feet; and their weather-beaten hues, as well as sharp summits, present a most imposing spectacle. This gigantic and continuous screen of mountains shelters the town on the east, west, and north, so that it is exposed only to the sweet influences of the balmy south. The semicircle of rocky peaks is composed of oolitic limestone, while the space which they enclose consists of a coarse sandstone; and thus the limestone rocks reflecting the heat of the sun, and the sandy soil absorbing whatever moisture there is, the climate of Mentone is exceptionally mild and dry. The lemon, which is too tender a tree for Cannes and Nice, flourishes in great luxuriance in this spot, and, with its paler foliage and golden fruit, greatly diversifies the more sombre tints of the olives and the pines among which it grows. The old town is built on the spur of one of the mountains, where it runs down into the sea, forming a rocky promontory, and consists of a collection of lofty old houses, rising terrace above terrace, the highest point being crowned by a castle or palace of the feudal lords, now converted into the public cemetery. Among the houses, and rising above the steep narrow street by a flight of ninety-five steps, is the ancient church of St. Michel, with its two elegant spires, conspicuous from every quarter. Dividing the whole town into two is the wide street, the Rue St. Michel, which is but a continuation of the Corniche Road from Nice to Genoa. Here are some of the principal shops and the bazaar, where everything that a human being can require is sold in the open street. The superior hotels and new shops are arranged along the Promenade du Midi, which is a pleasant roadway formed on the border of the sea, and is a great resort of invalids and strangers in the middle of the day. The olive-clad slopes behind are dotted with white and yellow-coloured villas, relieved by their red roofing-tiles and green jalousies. From the Protestant cemetery, at a

considerable height above the sea, containing many handsome marble monuments, and abounding in roses and other lovely flowers, which has recently received the dust of Mr. Green, the historian, a beautiful and extensive prospect can be obtained. And it is a mournful satisfaction to those who have had to leave their beloved ones behind and to go home alone, that these have been laid to rest in one of the loveliest burying-places in Europe. The hill was originally called Mont Othon, from which the name of Mentone is supposed to have been derived. It was crowned at first by a Saracenic fortress, and then by a mediæval castle, which has recently been removed to make room for the extension of the cemetery.

There are some interesting historical events commemorated at Mentone. The Rue de Bréa perpetuates the memory of the brave General de Bréa, who was born in one of the houses in this street, as an inscription on its wall testifies, and who was killed in Paris during the Revolution of June, 1848, while defending the barricades in the cause of order. On the garden wall of another house in this street is an inscription which states that Pope Pius VII., on his return from Paris to Rome, gave his blessing to the people on that spot. The house, No. 3, of this same street was that in which the Consul Napoleon resided when he was General-in-Chief of the army of Italy. A gateway near by, at the corner of the Rue Longue, has a deep mark in the stone made by the sword of a Frenchman who, under Massena, was driving the Austrians out of Nice in 1800. On the façade of a house in the Rue St. Michel is a marble tablet which tells us that here lived and died the Chevalier Charles Trenca, who took the leading part in the events which led to the deliverance of Mentone from the yoke of Monaco, and who was deeply mourned as the noblest of patriots and the most beloved of citizens. In the East Bay is the charming Swiss châlet belonging to the late Mr. Henfrey, in which Queen Victoria resided during her memorable visit to Mentone in the spring of 1882.

Mentone strikes the stranger as a somewhat dull place. An air of languid repose pervades it; there is no keen edge in its breeze, no crisp freshness in the breath of its sea. Whether it is owing to the shadow of its lofty mountains brooding over its narrow strip of ground, or to the presence in its streets, when the sun shines, of so many faces on which the seal of death is set, certainly a kind of gloom pervades it, which is somewhat depressing. A well-known writer, whose own fate was to die and be buried there, called it "that stuffy morgue, Mentone." Apart from this shadow, however, the walks and drives about Mentone are no less varied than beautiful. To the west, one of the most delightful is by the Monaco Road to Cape Martin, passing through fine old olive and carouba woods, with gnarled and much-divided trunks and long fantastic branches interlacing overhead, and casting down cool quivering lights and shadows on the white road. The Arcadian slopes above are densely wooded, hiding in their recesses a fragment of the Via Aurelia, with the ruins of a large Roman patrician tomb near it, indicating the old Roman station of Lumona, men-

Photo, Giletta, Nice.

The Red Rocks, Mentone.

To face p. 116.

tioned in Antonine's Itinerary; while the sea below forms beautiful cobalt-blue pools, and breaks in pale emerald and snowy wavelets among the jagged rocks. Here, too, may be found the lovely *Crocus Versicolor*, growing in February in considerable abundance. Near the point of the cape are the crumbling ruins of the convent of St. Martin, whose nuns, having once deceived the men of Mentone and Roccabruna by a false alarm, were carried off by the Saracens, having rung their bell for help in vain the second time.

To the east, an interesting walk may be taken along the Promenade, by the main road to the lofty frowning rocks on the sea-shore, which bound the landscape of Mentone in that direction, called, from their red colour, "Les Roches Rouges." They are picturesque in themselves, both in form and colour, and are shaggy with a wild growth of tree-euphorbias, rue, and rosemary; but they derive their chief interest from the famous bone-caves, which were exposed by the researches of M. Rivière, M. Jullien and M. Abbo, the owner of a quarry in which one of the caves lies. The rock is supposed to be of the same age as the English chalk; and the caves are only a few yards from the sea-shore, and from thirty to forty feet above sea-level. The deposit of earthy matter on the floor of these caves is nearly thirty feet in thickness, and proves that they must have been inhabited for a very long period, coming down to Roman times. In digging down through the various strata the explorers left behind iron relics, then bronze, and finally only stone or bone implements remained. In one of the caves—the largest—formed of very soft limestone, with huge stalactites depending from the roof, whose rapid growth had hermetically sealed the cave, there was found, twenty feet below the surface of the floor, a complete fossil human skeleton. Other skeletons were found in the lowest deposits of several of the other caves; so that altogether ten well-preserved skeletons of human beings were discovered. They were those of men, women and children. They were also of great size, the men being upwards of seven feet, and the women six.

The bones had been subjected to a curious process which at one time seems to have prevailed all over the world, and characterised every burial. The body was stripped of the flesh, and the bones were artificially stained of a deep red colour by the peroxide of iron. That the staining in this case was not caused by the infiltration of the mineral iron in the rock which tinged everything of an ochreous hue, is proved by the intensity and marked character of it, and also by the discovery of a great quantity of deep red powder, differing widely from anything occurring naturally in the rock, near the skeletons, which had evidently been used in dyeing them. There can be no doubt that the skeletons were painted red intentionally. Several of the skeletons had ornaments of shells, pierced with holes and strung together round their necks. The vertebræ of fish were also found in such a position as to indicate that they formed a necklace. The remarkable

thing was that these shells had not been picked up on the neighbouring sea-shore, but belonged to a species which existed only on the Atlantic coast, some hundreds of miles to the west. Some of them were mere fossil shells obtained from certain beds in Switzerland, some hundreds of miles to the north. Along with the human remains were found implements of bone and chipped flint arrows, and hammers and hatchets, of types which seemed to belong to the earliest races of men. The animal remains consisted of bones of the rhinoceros, the cave-lion, and the cave-bear, but there was no trace of the reindeer. At the very bottom of the principal cave the entire pelvis of a huge mammoth was found, and near it the ashes of a fire, which had apparently been kindled in order to cook the flesh of the monster. From many signs it was evident that the men and women whose skeletons had been discovered had not been interred by human hands. They had simply died and their bodies lay upon the then surface of the cave, and the subsequent accumulations had in the course of long ages buried them to this great depth. In all probability they belonged to the last race of paleolithic man, which everywhere else had disappeared before the severe climatic conditions which prevented the survivors of the inhabitants of the old stone age from passing into the new stone age—but which here, in the mild climate of the caverns of the Mediterranean coast, protected from the chill north, and with a southern sun continually beating down upon them, were able to maintain existence, and to endure from the one period to the other. To these Mentone caves men driven from the north by the severe conditions of the ice-age retreated, and were able to establish themselves when all the northern regions were closed to them.

There are three principal valleys, which open from the western bay towards the hills, and intersect the Mentonean amphitheatre from north to south. These are called the Carrei or Turin Valley, and parallel to it, farther west, the Borrigo and Gorbio Valleys, all of which have excellent carriage roads, and being well shaded by trees and sheltered by hills, are admirably adapted for invalids. The Carrei Valley is bordered for some distance by an avenue of plane-trees, and has at its lower part, on both sides, bright-looking villas embosomed among orange, lemon, and olive-trees. The bed of the torrent is wide and stony, and but a small quantity of water trickles through it. It commands some exquisite views, particularly that of the elevated ridge on which the monastic church of St. Annunciata is perched, with its grand, rugged, mountain background, the aspect of which varies every hour with the course of the sun, as it illumines it with light or veils it with shadow. This church is all that remains of an ancient village that once crowned this height, called Puypin, a corruption of the Latin name of Podium Pinum, or Hill of Pines, by which it was known in historical documents. Count Otho, of Ventimiglia, had a castle on it, and pilgrimages used to be made to the chapel of Notre Dame de Puypin by persons with various diseases, who sought the help of the Virgin. It is recorded that in 1660 the sister of Louis I., Prince of Monaco, was cured of leprosy by a visit

to this church, in gratitude for which she built fifteen chapels along the road leading to it in honour of the mystery of the rosary.

Farther up the valley, on a high eminence, are the church and straggling village of Monti; and about a mile beyond, in a narrow gorge on the eastern bank of the Carrei, is the cascade of the Bourg de L'Ora, which affords many a study to the artist and stanza for the poet. It is about 120 feet high, and the water leaps from rock to rock till it reaches the small basin at the foot. High up on the left is the Hermit's Cave, called the Balconetta, excavated in the face of an almost vertical cliff. With this grotto is associated a most romantic legend. Robert de Ferques, one of the lords of Provence, followed the banner of the Count of Boulogne in the third crusade. His young wife, to whom he had recently been married, unable to bear the sorrow of separation, resolved to follow him. Assuming the disguise of a man's dress, she acted, with his consent, as his esquire. But unhappily, in the journey to the east, she fell from her horse, and was so seriously injured that she died soon after. Her husband was so overwhelmed with grief that he gave up the expedition, and seeking this lonely spot, he spent the rest of his life in prayer and meditation.

The road leads upwards and onwards to Castiglione and Sospello, through a little Switzerland. The air of the valley of Borrigo is sweet with the perfume of violets, which grow everywhere in vast profusion; while the side valleys which branch off it, called the Cabrolles and Chataigniers Valleys, abound in wild flowers, one being the pure white cephalanthera, or lily of the valley orchid, and another the common primrose, which is not very common in the Riviera, being found in only one other place in equal abundance—the Valley of the Var. The Gorbio Valley is still more charming, being narrower and more secluded, and there is more water in the stream that flows through it, making a delicious music over its rocky bed, and quickening all the scene with its baptism of refreshment. The town of Gorbio, from which the valley derives its name, crowns a lofty conical-shaped rock, about 1,400 feet high, hemmed in by olive-coloured ridges on either side. Above its cluster of old stone houses, crowded closely together, and united by arches thrown across the narrow streets, towers one of the ruined castles of the Lascari, which had been the scene of many a fight. There is also a quaint old church with a sombre nave. And nothing can be more picturesque than many bits of the streets with their gloomy arches and paved steps, over which wheels have never passed, and even donkeys often slide with their forefeet and come down on their haunches, to the no small discomfiture of the unaccustomed rider.

But the grandest excursion of all is to the little mountain village of St. Agnese, 2,200 feet above the sea, and to the old Saracenic castle, about 300 feet beyond, so conspicuous from Mentone, high up in the air; both commanding a grand view of the mountains, with the steep Swiss-like Aiguille towering above them all, flushed with the rosy light of dawn and sunset. A romantic legend of a Moorish chief of

the tenth century—who embraced Christianity in order to marry a beatiful maiden of Provence, whom he had carried away captive—is connected with the hoary old ruin. It is told at considerable length, and in tender poetic guise, by M. Abel Rendu, under the name of "Anna and Haroun." The little valley of Garavan is worthy of notice, as having formed the frontier of France during the French Revolution. The leading inhabitants of Mentone, who had the misfortune to be proscribed by the authorities, were obliged, during this reign of terror, to leave their homes and take up their abode in this valley. Some who ventured to cross the boundary to visit their families at night were caught, and suffered death on the scaffold.

The sea in the East Bay of Mentone has often a grand appearance. Many of the phenomena of the Mediterranean are unique. Unlike the other great seas of the world, it has almost no tide; and there is, therefore, a strange sameness in its appearance and voice. In calm its lovely blue surface looks like that of a lake, a resemblance which is still further increased by the absence of that fresh, briny odour of the veritable ocean, which makes the air of our own sea-coasts so invigorating. In storm it has little or no variety. Even when lashed by one of its furious winds into seething foam, its billows are entirely different from the magnificent rollers of the Atlantic coming in with a strong breeze and a rising tide; they are monotonous in their form and movement, and break in ceaseless crashes upon the same shingly ridges. I have watched for hours the waves, driven by a strong mistral, lashing the shore; but, notwithstanding their tremendous magnitude and force, the line of foam on the beach continued always the same. Not an inch of the pebbles was wetted beyond that line. They retreated and advanced to this point with the regularity and precision of a pendulum. Gazing seaward upon the mountainous mass of foam advancing with terrific speed and impetus, it seemed as if the whole shore would be overwhelmed with an overflowing flood; but at my feet, at precisely the same point where it last expended its fury, it broke as gently as a ripple upon the brim of a mountain tarn. I have seen a lady sitting on a camp-stool on the shore, within a few inches of the edge of the sea, calmly sketching the wonderful billows as they arched and curled over into foam, when to the spectator the situation seemed full of imminent peril; but like the might of the lion beside the innocence of Una, the raging of the sea was tamed, and it only shook the drops from its hoary mane as it crouched at her feet. I had, with such a spectacle before my eyes, a more vivid idea than I ever realised before of the force and significance of the Scripture words, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." The Mediterranean Sea, more than any other sea, because of its want of tides, gives one the idea of a chained force. When you stand upon its shores you feel as if you touched the very feet of Jehovah, and saw them indicating the limit of its force. No such impression is received from the Atlantic, or any other tidal sea.

So also no other sea could give the illustration which the prophet derived from

Photo, Giletta, Nice.

The Port of Mentone.

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the Mediterranean as he watched its waters alternately engulfing and casting up the sandy and chalky soil of the beach under the lash of the west wind: "The wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt." The same phenomenon may be observed in the Riviera as in Palestine. The waves, as they beat upon the shore, grind the rocks and stones, and stir up a great amount of white solid matter, which gives the water along the beach a milky appearance. The incessant pounding of the waters on the same part of the shore—for even when the sky is calm and serene the waters of the sea are often agitated by the swell of some storm that has spent its fury in some other region of its wide domain—the continual grinding of the wave-mill at the same point, produces more *débris* from the surrounding calcareous rocks along the shores of the Mediterranean than can be seen along the shores of any other sea. If the water of the Mediterranean is examined by means of a concentrated beam of light, it is found to be full of fine particles held in suspension, which reflect rays of all colours; and the water, by its selective absorption, allows only the blue rays to be reflected to the surface and to the eye. Near the shore the colour is lighter and greener than it is farther out, owing to the greater quantity of white solid matter which the water holds in suspension; and the variety in the colouring of the sea, like the bickering hues upon a dove's neck, is due to the amount of suspended particles at different places and at different times. No one looking at the clear transparent waters of the Mediterranean would ever imagine that it was full of impurity—more full, indeed, of impurity than the waters of our seas and lochs, that look so dark and drumly in comparison. And yet it is so in reality; that very impurity is the cause of its lovely transparency and blueness, just as the small particles of dust suspended in the air give the sky its beautiful clear azure hue.

A very able young naturalist, Mr. J. T. Moggridge, who died about twenty years ago at Mentone, found pleasant occupation for an invalid's life in exploring the natural history of the district. In the midst of great physical weakness and suffering he made, with enthusiasm, a large number of original observations on the flora and fauna, which he published in two charming books, called "The Flora of Mentone," and "Harvesting Ants and Trap-door Spiders." Nothing can be more interesting than his account of these remarkable insects. Trap-door spiders are rather rare at Nice; the only place where I found them there was in the beautiful grounds of Liserb, belonging to my lamented friend, the late Edward Cazalet. At Cannes they are quite numerous: and almost every dry mossy bank in the neighbourhood of Mentone used to contain specimens; but they are much less numerous of late, having been made an article of commerce which the children sell to visitors. The habits of these spiders—of which there are several species—are very curious. Their nests consist of tubes excavated in the earth to a greater or less depth, lined with silk, and closed with a lid like that of an old-fashioned Scotch snuff-mull, furnished

with a hinge. The lid fits so accurately, and is so artfully covered with bits of moss and dead leaves, that it is almost impossible to detect the nest, which seems quite continuous with the rest of the mossy bank. The nests are, as a rule, the result of many successive enlargements; the tube of the young spider being no bigger than a crow-quill, but as the creature grows it is made roomier, to suit its requirements. The adult spider, however, does not always reconstruct its nest when destroyed. Hence it is a piece of wanton cruelty to rob it of its home. There are several species, some of which are very local in their distribution. They are all exceedingly sedentary in their habits, beginning life immediately on leaving the parent nest by making homes for themselves near at hand, which they never leave. They are more active by night than by day, and it is more common to find the lids of their traps half open in the evening, with the spider posted on the look-out at the narrow opening.

No less curious are the habits of the harvesting ants, which also abound in the neighbourhood of Mentone. Their provident instincts have been called in question by some writers, but Mr. Moggridge found the statements in the Book of Proverbs true in every particular. I have frequently dug up the nests of ants in the Riviera, and found the passages filled with the seeds of different plants growing in the neighbourhood, whose embryos in every case had been cunningly nibbled off, so as to prevent germination. The harvesting ant of the Riviera is the *Atta Barbara*, which has two forms, one wholly black, the other red-headed. And it is most interesting to watch, on the wild ground where it makes its nest, how it brings in, not only seed grains, but even ripe seed-pods, such as those of the shepherd's purse, which it pulls off the stem. When several are engaged in this latter occupation they drop the seed pods from the top of the plant to their companions below, who carry them away, exactly in the manner described by Ælian, a Roman poet who lived in the time of Hadrian. "They gnaw through the stalks of the ears, throwing them down to the people below, which cut away the chaff which covers the grain. So the ants, though they need no threshing time, nor men to winnow for them, nor an artificial draught of wind to separate corn and chaff, yet have the food of men, who both plough and sow for it." The lesson to the sluggard could not have been conveyed in a more graphic and instructive manner. But the most curious of the insects of this region is the little religious mantis, which is often found among the bushes, and looks, with its bent forelegs, when settled on a twig—which it closely resembles—as if it were praying. The peasants regard it with superstitious reverence, and, whenever they see it, say, "Little old man, pray for me."

From Mentone the Corniche Road ascends gradually above the sea-shore, and is carried over the Red Rocks containing the bone caverns. The view, looking back, of the white fringe of villas along the shore, the picturesque old town huddled together on its rocky promontory, and of the amphitheatre of hoary peaks which

Photo, Giletta, Nice. *Mentone.*

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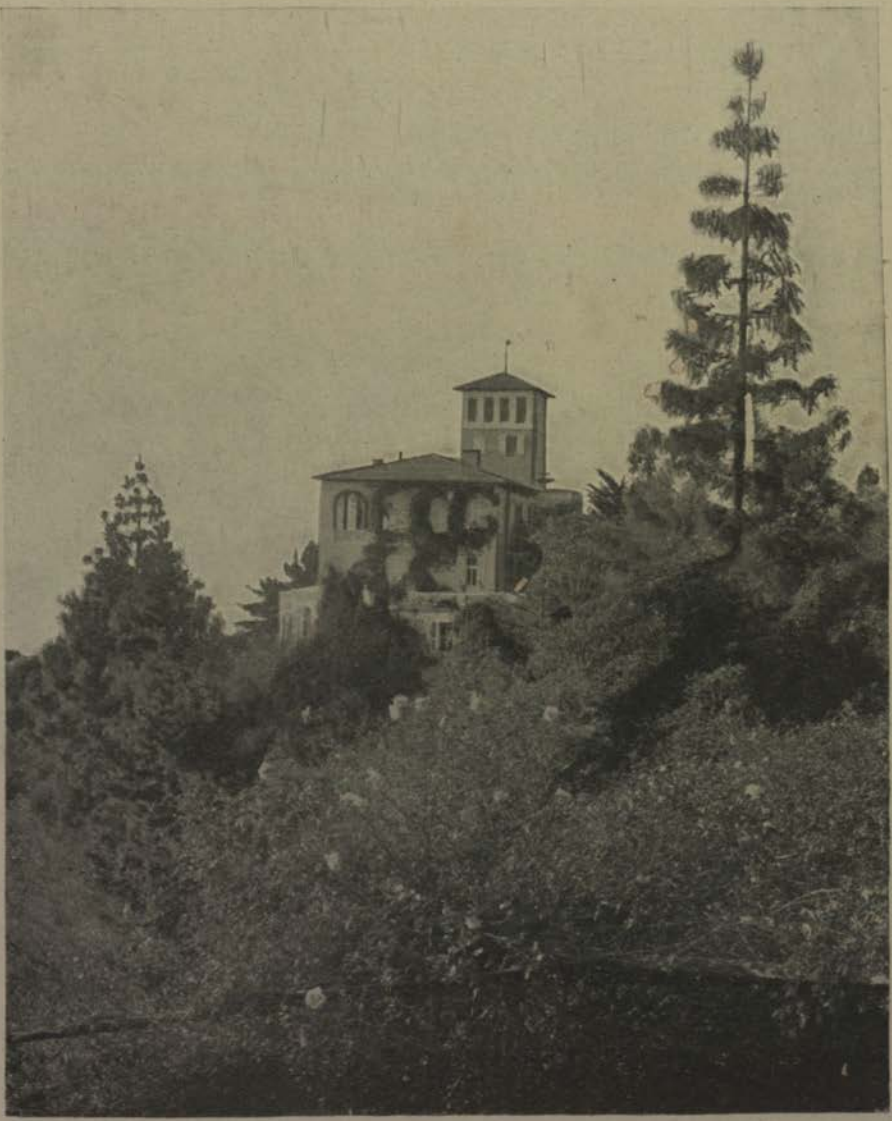
overhang the bay, combines all the elements of beauty and grandeur in a very exceptional manner. About a mile and a-half from Mentone the road crosses the gorge of St. Louis, formed between the mountains of the Berceau and Belinda. This ravine is a narrow cleft, about 400 feet deep, through which, when in flood, an impetuous torrent roars and foams far below. It is spanned, at a height of 150 feet above the water, by a modern substantial one-arched bridge, which looks very airy and picturesque when seen from a distance. It is made still more picturesque by the remains of an old aqueduct, a little above the stream and immediately beneath the bridge, by which the water is carried to some olive mills. The rocks, towering precipitously above on either side, are remarkably bold and rugged; while the eye looks from the white arid heights, bleached by the fierce glare of the sun, down over the parapets into the cold dark chasm with a shiver. This weird ravine now marks the appropriate and well-defined boundary between France and Italy. Standing in the middle of the bridge, one foot may be placed in the former country, and the other in the latter. The Italian douaniers have their station-house by the road-side a little beyond the bridge, perched prominently on the highest part of the precipitous rocks, which contain, immediately beneath, four of the principal bone caves already alluded to; while the French custom-house is placed considerably nearer Mentone, so as to prevent all possibility of collision.

Beyond the Italian station, a stony and much frequented path branches off from the road, and leads up to the well-known garden of Dr. Bennet, who was the first to bring the claims and the charms of Mentone as a health resort to the notice of English visitors; so that he may be said to have made Mentone, in the sense that Lord Brougham made Cannes, and Smollett, Nice. The garden is laid out on the terraced sides of the steep mountain, and is a most remarkable example of the triumph of skill and perseverance over almost insuperable difficulties. These difficulties Dr. Bennet has narrated in a very charming book, entitled "Winter and Spring on the Shores of the Mediterranean." The naked arid rocks, baking in the hot sunshine, have been made, by elaborate irrigation and artificial soil, to bloom and smile with the most varied and luxuriant exotic vegetation. The garden is open to all, and in the long avenues of vines and twining plants, whose forms, hues and perfumes take all the senses captive, among the beds of rare and brilliant flowers, and beside a fountain embossed in beauty, diffusing freshness and brightness around it by its murmurous drip, a couple of hours will fly away with magic swiftness. An old Saracenic tower in the grounds, once used as a watch-tower when the Barbary pirates were the terror of the inhabitants of this lovely coast, overlooks the whole vast panorama of Mentone and Monaco, whose varying loveliness of shape and hue, land and sea, fascinates the eye and holds the spectator spellbound. Above the garden, steep precarious goat-tracks lead through olive and lemon terraces, and over wild naked rocks, to the curious old village of Grimaldi, on the shoulder of Belinda, with its

church and spire picturesquely gleaming out from groves of olive-trees. On the hot, dizzy precipices beside it a more extended, but not a more delightful, view is obtained, for the eye that in the former case was allured by curves and limits, on to more wonderful imaginary scenes beyond, in the latter sees all that is to be seen—the whole wide expanse of sea and shore from the Esterels to San Remo; and much of the beauty and grandeur that depends upon mystery and expectancy is thus lost.

A very rough path near here leads to Castellar, situated on a plateau at a height of 1,500 feet above the sea. It winds up among scattered pine-trees on the side of the mountain, and, though very fatiguing, affords ample compensation in the series of charming views which it discloses at every step. It takes a stout pedestrian fully an hour to reach the eagle's eyrie on its burning rock. Castellar is one of the numerous villages of this coast built centuries ago for protection from the Algerine corsairs. It consists of a single street of squalid houses, grouped round the usual picturesque church and spire, and the hoary walls of a castle of the Lascaris, descendants of the Byzantine emperors, who once ruled over this wide region, all crowded together on a narrow platform. The interior of the castle has on its vaulted ceilings frescoes of scriptural and mythological subjects by Carloni. In the neighbourhood may be found the remarkable blue variety of the Anemone Coronaria, which comes into flower at this place soon after Christmas. Castellar, however, may be reached far more easily by a good carriage road along the Val de Mentone, from the Rue du Castellar in Mentone, and is one of the favourite excursions of visitors in this locality. Castiglione is also well worthy of a visit. It is a most singular Moorish-looking village, perched high on an apparently inaccessible crag in the midst of bleak arid hills and precipices. Its entrance is guarded by a strong double gateway; and half its houses are cut out of the solid rock. Sospello, too, claims a word of notice, on account of its mediæval towers and ramparts and dark Gothic church of unknown age, and its memories of the Templars and tragic associations of the Albigenses, who, under the name of Barbets, because of their long beards, were here burnt alive in the public square, still called, in consequence, Cremaja. On some of the Alpine rocks of this region may be seen very curious sculptures, called *Meraviyli*, which tradition assigns to the soldiers of Hannibal's army; but they are either prehistoric carvings, similar to those of North and South America, Australia, and New Zealand, or, what is more probable, simply the runes or hieroglyphics made by the stones embedded in a glacier as it flowed slowly over the surfaces which itself had smoothed.



Photo, Miss Willmott.

Palazzo Orengo, La Mortola.

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XI.

LA MORTOLA AND VENTIMIGLIA.

NOTHING can exceed the naked barrenness of the brown mountain-side, as it slopes down from the road to the sea beyond the Italian station-house. It looks as if a gigantic landslip had recently happened there, over which nature has not had time to spread her healing bloom, although in reality it had at one time been covered with a dense scrub. Hardly a tuft of grass or thyme, or a bush of rosemary or euphorbia, creeps over the scarred surface, which painfully reflects the glaring sunshine. One plant, however, has chosen these barren slopes for its habitat, the very rare *Moricandia arvensis*, being only found in Europe in the narrow strip of land between the Gorge of St. Louis and Ventimiglia. It is a fine tall cruciferous plant, and forms a redeeming feature in the desolate scenery by its rich purple flowers waving in profusion over the dry rocks. A mile and a-half beyond this point, rounding a long corner, we come in sight of the delightful little village of La Mortola, embosomed among olive-trees, with its picturesque church and campanile standing out above the grey-green foliage and the red-tiled houses. On the slope of the hill below the village, extending to the sea-shore, are the famous terraced gardens of Sir Thomas Hanbury, which form one of the principal show places of the Riviera, and to which the public are admitted in the afternoons of Monday and Friday. They are about sixty acres in extent, and contain nearly five thousand species of plants cultivated in the open air. They occupy a position not unlike the projecting Cape of Monaco, and combine, like that wonderful spot, a great variety of scenery. Loveliness is enhanced by contrast with barrenness, and sublimity with beauty. The richest semi-tropical verdure is framed in a setting of the most arid and desolate rocks. Our late Gracious Queen, during her sojourn at Mentone, spent on two occasions several hours there, admiring the various objects of interest, and sketching the exuisite features of the landscape. The Empress Eugénie, the King and Queen of Saxony, and Prince Leopold also visited the gardens the same season.

For the richness and variety of their contents, and the loveliness of their surroundings, Sir Thomas Hanbury's gardens have few rivals in Europe. They form a

great open-air conservatory, in which, such is the mildness of the winter temperature and the heat of the summer sun, plants that we are accustomed to see grown under glass with the greatest care, develop an unexampled beauty and luxuriance. From Australia and China, from Japan and Africa, from North and South America and India, from every quarter of the globe whose climate is at all similar to that of this favoured spot, a vast variety of the most interesting and remarkable plants have been brought together with infinite labour and skill; and they impart to the new home in which they are acclimatised, an appearance so novel and curious, that the first feeling in the mind of every visitor is one of absolute bewilderment. Splendid date-palms grow side by side with lofty Australian acacias and eucalypti. The grandest agaves in Europe, with leaves seven feet in length, sending up huge green candelabra of hundreds of flowers for thirty feet, form a little forest beside the marble terrace of the house facing the sea. At the entrance-gates large Casuarinas, the she-oak of Australia, stand sentinel, with long, drooping needle-like leaves, presenting a superficial resemblance to some antique pine-trees, but when closely examined repeating the old-world pattern, down to the minutest detail, of the common equisetum, or horse-tail, of our own waste places. When the breeze blows through its pendulous branches it produces a peculiar low melancholy wail, suggestive of the wild "corrobary," unlike the wind-drawn sound of any other tree. Enormous spindle-shaped heads or maces of blue Echium-blossoms arrest the astonished visitor on the terraced walks. Broad-leaved Cannas drink in the sunshine at every pore, and the grand foliage and huge dark crimson, strong-smelling spikes of the Melianthus cast a deep shadow over the walks; while great leafless Euphorbias rise up from the tangled mass of vegetation like church spires, and the arborescent composite Kleinia unfolds its daisy-like blooms as luxuriously as on its native trachyte at Teneriffe. Perhaps the most attractive feature of the gardens is the extensive pergola, or, as it is locally called, *topia*—a long arcade covered with masses of gorgeous Bougainvillea, climbing roses, passion-flowers, mesembryanthemums, and pelargoniums, creating a charming sheltered walk, through which the sunshine is filtered in streams of gold, lighting up the brilliant colours of leaves and flowers like living jewels. On the south side of the house, the views from the terraced garden are most varied and extensive. Here there is a fountain containing an extraordinary fish called the telescopic-eyed double-tailed Chinese carp. To the west, precipitous rocks, rising to a great height from a deep gorge, their sides covered with myrtle, rosemary, thyme, lavender, and bushes of shrubby euphorbia, growing wild among the crevices, and their top crowned with dark olives and deep-green pines, add greatly to the picturesqueness of the cultivated loveliness beneath; while the views of the romantic coast as far as San Remo, and of the deep-blue, far-spreading Mediterranean —seen through the trees and transfigured by a light, crystalline in its purity, that makes even the commonest object a picture—seem like glimpses of paradise.

Photo, Miss Willmott.

The Cypress Avenue, La Mortola.

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But besides these wonderful beauties of nature and art, the place derives an additional interest from the associations of the past. Through the lower part of the grounds, not far from the shore, runs the old Roman road, the Via Aurelia, which for several centuries was the ordinary route from Gaul to Italy. It is called by Aristotle the Heraclean Way, by which the demi-god Hercules passed from the home of the Ligurians to the countries farther south. This myth is now generally supposed to personify and deify the Phœnician or Tyrian nation, which traded at a very early period with the different ports along the shores of ancient Provence. This road must have been in use for well-nigh three thousand years. Pope Innocent IV. passed along it in 1251; Catharine of Siena in 1376; Machiavelli in 1511; Charles V. and his army in 1536; Pope Paul III. in 1538, and Napoleon Bonaparte and his army in 1796. There are some still living who have traversed it on horseback, as the only way by which they could go from Marseilles to Genoa. It is now superseded by the modern Corniche road, which runs parallel with it through Sir Thomas Hanbury's estate, at a higher elevation; and by the railway, whose line of route crosses between it and the sea, and brings together the past and the present, the labours of the old Pontifex Maximus and those of the modern engineer, in the most striking manner. Sir Thomas Hanbury has preserved this narrow path with the utmost care, and enclosed it between walls draped with ivy and other creepers. No human footfall breaks its suggestive silence. Nature has taken it back into her own bosom after having so long served the interests of man, has partially obliterated the traces of human art by her lovely mosaic of southern wild flowers, and laid her all-subduing carpet of moss and lichen, where the rattle of the chariot and the shout of the Roman soldier once startled the echoes of the hills.

At this part of the road there was an old Roman cemetery, where the gardeners, in turning up the ground, frequently come upon sepulchral remains, inscriptions, coins, and tear-bottles. Sir Thomas Hanbury has an interesting collection of these relics. There is something eminently suggestive to the imagination in this association of the old burying-place with the exquisite modern garden. It brings to remembrance the garden around the sacred sepulchre, linking together the degradation of man and the beauty of nature; the one speaking of a Paradise lost, and the other of a Paradise regained. A local tradition, which has come down continuously from the remote past, asserts that Julia Procilla, the mother of Agricola, was buried on or near this spot. We know very little regarding this most remarkable woman; and for that little we are indebted to Tacitus, the Roman historian, who married her granddaughter. To her, Agricola was indebted for the formation of his character, and for his success in life. She watched over his early years, which were spent on this coast, at the Roman colony of Forum Julii, the modern Fréjus, with the truest and tenderest solicitude; and by precept and example inspired him with a love of all that was noble and good. And she was rewarded by seeing him grow up to be one of

the grandest characters of Roman history; universally admired for his genius as an administrator, and beloved in the private relations of life for his singular uprightness and goodness. For thirty-three years she exercised the greatest influence over him; and when she died in Liguria his grief was profound and lasting. During the twenty-two years he outlived her, he never ceased to observe the anniversary of her death in deep seclusion and sadness.

On the ceiling of Sir Thomas Hanbury's drawing-room there is a most beautiful fresco, painted by a modern Italian artist, representing the parting of Agricola from his mother in sight of this cape, on his way to take the supreme command of the Roman army in Britain. It does ample justice to the touching scene, and brings vividly to one's remembrance the wonderful results that followed from that parting. Every one knows how admirably Agricola governed the people, whom he had subdued by force of arms in a brilliant succession of battles. From the Forth to the Thames he reconciled the rude inhabitants to the Roman yoke, taught them the arts of civilised life, how to make roads, and to build comfortable dwelling-houses and temples. He induced them to abandon their wandering habits and to settle down in towns and villages. He established a system of education for the sons of the British chiefs. In short, during the seven years of his residence in Britain, he may be said to have laid the foundation of the British Empire, and to have made of a lawless barbaric race a great historic nation.

There is another association of recent days connected with the gardens of La Mortola, which, in its own way, is scarcely less interesting and touching. One of the remarkable objects of the place is the storax-tree, resembling a quince, and producing a profusion of pure white fragrant blossoms not unlike those of the orange. It grows wild, as already observed, in the mountain woods on the east side of Toulon, in the south of Italy, Greece, and all over the Levant. But the scarcity of fuel in these regions bears hard upon the tree; for being periodically pollarded, or pruned down, in common with the other trees growing nearit, it can seldom attain a greater height than eight or nine feet. When allowed to grow undisturbed to its full size in favourable circumstances, it exudes a fragrant resin, in separate or more or less agglutinated tears. This resin has had a classical reputation from the earliest times. It was always somewhat scarce and valuable, and in modern times, owing to the crippling of the trees producing it, has disappeared altogether from commerce. We have every reason to believe that it formed one of the ingredients in the holy incense prepared for the service of the tabernacle in the wilderness, which it was unlawful to imitate. It is still used as incense in the churches of Asia Minor, and at Easter in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, small pieces being sold to pilgrims at enormous prices, not for burning, but to be worn on the person as a charm. For years Sir Thomas Hanbury's brother, the late celebrated pharmacologist, Daniel Hanbury, searched for a specimen of this resin on the trees producing it, all over

Photo, Miss Willmott.

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[*Group of Agaves at La Mortola.*

Southern France, Asia Minor, and Syria. To elucidate the mystery connected with its nature and origin, he undertook a special pilgrimage, along with Sir Joseph Hooker, the director of Kew Gardens, to the Holy Land. But his efforts were all in vain. Everywhere he found the tree crippled for fuel, and, therefore, unable to produce its resin. His delight may, therefore, be imagined when, walking one day in his brother's garden at La Mortola, he found a young well-formed tree which exuded the rare gum he was in search of. This was in December, 1874, and he died in the following March, of typhoid fever. The precious tears were collected into a small phial, and his brother has ever since preserved them as a memorial in his study with reverential care. Sir Thomas Hanbury has many specimens of storax-trees in his gardens, which, as duly as May comes round, are covered with fragrant white blossoms; but the remarkable thing is, that he has never found on any of them since his brother's death a single tear.

At the entrance gate to the Gardens, there is a fountain of delicious cold water carried ingeniously in a pipe through the trunk of an old olive tree; and on the gateway the large Chinese character, "Fo," has been inwrought, at the suggestion of the first ambassador sent by China to England, who was a visitor here. This is a pleasant memento of Sir Thomas Hanbury's own life as a merchant in China. The house dates from the fourteenth or fifteenth century, and was originally owned by the Lanteri of Ventimiglia, whose last representative sold it in 1620 to the noble family of Orengo, from whom Sir Thomas Hanbury purchased it. The celebrated Machiavelli is supposed to have remained here a few days, when, in the company of Lanteri, the then owner of the house, he travelled from Florence to Monaco. The oldest part of the building is of extraordinary strength and solidity, and withstood, without the slightest injury, the severe shocks of a recent earthquake, which seriously damaged the beautiful marble loggia and terrace, and the other modern additions which Sir Thomas Hanbury had made to it. The porch has, on the outside, terra-cotta medallions of the botanists Linnæus and Decandolle, with a happy Latin inscription composed by the statesman, John Bright, who was a great friend of the owner. In the inside is a fine mosaic by Salviati of Venice, representing Marco Polo, the first traveller to China; while the floors of the salon and ante-chamber, adjoining the hall, are copies of beautiful Roman mosaics found at Leicester and Lincoln, thus uniting the two homes of Agricola, the presiding genius of the place.

Beyond the Palazzo Orengo, on the road to Ventimiglia, is the Val di Latte, the Valley of Milk, one of the most romantic and fertile little nooks in the Riviera. A stream of considerable size, called La Bevera, has broken behind it through the monotonous barrier of the mountain range and flows into the Roya. The slopes of the hills and the level space, or delta, with a cluster of old-fashioned houses situated on it along the shore, lately used for quarantine purposes in connection with the threatening of cholera, are thickly covered with very fine lemon-trees, which bear

abundant fruit, and Japanese medlars, which fill the air with the delicate perfume of their blossoms. Rocks of nummulitic limestone, worn into curious hollows by the action of the elements, present a wild and craggy appearance, and give the lemons and medlars the shelter from the winds and the reflected heat and light which they love. Here, among the olive and lemon groves, one may bring back in imagination the old Greek pastoral life, and every feature and incident in the landscape helps to reproduce the golden age which the poets described.

Passing from this quiet idyllic spot, we are speedily ushered into the din and bustle of the frontier town of Ventimiglia. Here the Paris, Lyons and Mediterranean Railway terminates, and the Italian line begins; consequently passengers have to alight, and their luggage is examined, entailing a delay of several hours. The train starts by Roman time which is forty-three minutes faster than Paris time, and twenty-four minutes faster than that at Nice. From the station, which has a number of very large tree-like castor-oil plants beside it, the old town is very well seen sloping up the hill, with its church and baptistery occupying a prominent position. The frowning fortress, higher up still, which used to guard the road leading from France to Italy, and which was such a dominating and impressive feature in the scene, has, owing to the political arrangements made between the two countries, been destroyed, to the lasting regret of every lover of the picturesque. Near the cathedral there are several promenades exposed to the full sunshine, or shaded, by fine full-foliaged plane-trees, and provided with benches, which command very extensive and lovely views, and are the favourite resorts of the inhabitants, especially in the evening.

The modern town consists of a long straight street running along the lower ground and terminating westward in the bridge that crosses the Roya. The bed of this torrent is as wide and stony as that of the Paillon at Nice, but it has a far larger body of water, which never fails, even in the dryest season. Consequently, the numerous rivulets which flow over its bed are lined with washerwomen, who carry on their useful avocation more satisfactorily here than anywhere else in the Riviera. The view from the bridge up the wide open valley of the Roya is magnificent, with village after village perched on successive heights, ending in the grand snowy peaks of the Col de Tenda range, which are seen here to greater advantage than from any other point, and seem apparently but a few miles distant. But while this feature adds to the sublimity of the landscape, it detracts from its salubrity; for piercingly cold winds often sweep down from the Alps, and prevent Ventimiglia from being ever selected as a health resort for invalids. For this reason the charming old town has been passed by, standing sullenly apart from all the fashion and gaiety of modern life on either side of it. One realises an old-world feeling here more thoroughly than in most other Italian towns of similar size and age.

The ruins of an amphitheatre and forum about a mile eastward, and many other

Photo, Giletta, Nice.

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Ventimiglia.

Roman remains recently exposed in the place, remind us that Ventimiglia was a flourishing station in the time of Augustus, supplied with all the luxurious accessories of Roman life. The amphitheatre has been excavated by Professor Rossi in an immense sandbank, which the winds of many centuries had accumulated over it, and from unmistakable signs appears to have been destroyed and rebuilt at a much later period. Portions of the semicircular tiers of seats for the spectators and of the larger gateways have been well preserved. A cemetery has been disclosed beside it, in which five tombs have been opened, one being the last resting-place of Tranquillus, the prefect of the Roman soldiers, and the other containing a Christian epitaph. On Mount Magliocca, above Ventimiglia, there is a conspicuous old ruin, which still bears the name of Castel d'Appio, and is supposed to have been erected by the Roman Consul, Appius Claudius, to secure the fruit of his victories over the Ligurians in this neighbourhood, two hundred years before Christ. Hannibal marched up the valley of the Roya in his famous passage over the Alps from the south of Gaul into Upper Italy; and the memory of the great Carthaginian general is still engraved upon the traditions of the neighbourhood, and the peasants often speak of the wonderful sight of the swarthy African legions thundering past in the days of their remote ancestors.

Ventimiglia is a very old town, dating far back to prehistoric times. It was originally a port town of a Ligurian tribe, called by the Romans Ligures Intemelii, from whence its modern name has been derived. The oldest objects in the town are the cathedral of St. Maria and the church of St. Michael, extremely ancient buildings, which had been erected respectively on the ruins of a temple of Juno and of Castor and Pollux; for Christianity was introduced here at a very early date, according to the voice of tradition, by the Apostle Barnabas, who founded the bishopric of Ventimiglia. Both churches, however, have been much modernised. The pulpit of the cathedral, of richly carved white marble, is decorated with lovely Venetian mosaics; while in a subterranean chapel may be seen an enormous octagonal baptismal font, in which the ceremony of immersion was performed in early ages. St. Michael is distinguished by its brown campanile and rounded apse; and the holy-water basin and the short columns of the crypt are made of Roman milestones, still bearing their old inscriptions. After the decay of the Roman Empire the town developed rapidly, owing to its strong position, which in those troubled times attracted an ever-increasing population. The Emperor Otho I. gave it, in the tenth century, the rank of "county." After an heroic and protracted struggle with Genoa, and with its own count, it achieved its independence, and held sway over eight neighbouring communes, called the Villæ Vintimilienses, whom it ultimately drove by oppression into revolt against the hated yoke. The whole history of the town is full of vicissitude and romance. It was taken and sacked by Genoese, Spaniards, Neapolitans, Sardinians, Austrians, and French in turn, being continually the victim

or scapegoat of the varying fortunes of European war. In 1742 the port was blockaded by the English fleet, and great stores of grain were destroyed in the town; but though the inhabitants speak of this event as a bombardment and sack, not a single gun was fired nor was a life lost on the occasion. It is interesting to remember that Tobias Smollett, who afterwards brought these shores into literary notice, was an assistant-surgeon on board this squadron, and in this service acquired the materials from which he concocted the admirable sketches of marine life in his works. Last January Sir Thomas Hanbury of La Mortola, built a suitable library in the town to hold the famous Biblioteca Aprosiana, which for many years had lain neglected, owing to the want of a proper place for the utilisation of the books. There are about 6,000 volumes of printed books, and some most interesting and valuable MSS.; but there is no catalogue. Angelico Aprosio, who was a Monk of the Augustinian order, and highly esteemed in the learned world, published a work respecting this library, "Biblioteca Aprosiana," Bologna 1673—which abounds in curious notices of books, and particulars of the author's life. It is much sought after by bibliographers. Aprosio was born in Ventimiglia in 1607, and died in 1681. In unpacking the boxes containing his books, a capital portrait of Aprosio was found in a good state of preservation, and another of one of the Cassini—the famous astronomers of Perinaldo.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC

XII.

BORDIGHERA, SAN REMO AND ALASSIO.

BORDIGHERA has a character of its own, quite distinct from that of any other place on the Riviera. This special character it owes to its date-palms, which grow here in greater abundance and luxuriance than anywhere else in Europe, with the sole exception of Elche, in Spain. It is the Jericho of Europe, and has a far finer climate and more beautiful situation than that famous old town possessed. Bordighera is embosomed, it is said, in upwards of ten thousand palm-trees, and the number is being continnally increased by planting and sowing Egyptian seed. They meet the eye at every point, in single trees or in groves, standing alone or mingling with the grey-green foliage of the olive. They raise their tall crowns over the garden walls, or form shady eastern-looking clumps around the walls outside the town. They are seen with their russet stems and magnificent plumes of rich green leaves against the bright blue background of the sea, or the deep purple of the distant hills. They are of all sizes and ages, from the mere nurslings of a few years to giant patriarchs, over a hundred feet in height. Their attitudes are also very varied, some standing stiff and erect in all their pillared majesty, others leaning very much to one side. Their stems are naked or gracefully covered with ivy wreaths and climbing smilax sprays—a strange combination.

On the eastern side of Cape Ampeglia are the principal palm-groves, for there they are protected by the mountain ridge from the westerly winds, and are free in the hot sunshine to develop their fullest beauty. In the garden of Signor Moreno the most magnificent specimens are to be seen, some of them three or four hundred years old, and presenting as grand an appearance as those which grow under the burning sun of the Sahara. This being a well-sheltered spot, the date-clusters, which elsewhere rarely reach maturity, become perfectly ripe and have the power of germinating; and many seedlings may be observed growing spontaneously from the fruits that have dropped to the ground. This dense palm-grove, with its intermingling of old and young trees growing freely without help of man in nature's wild luxuriance, gives rise to eastern illusions and brings vividly before the mind

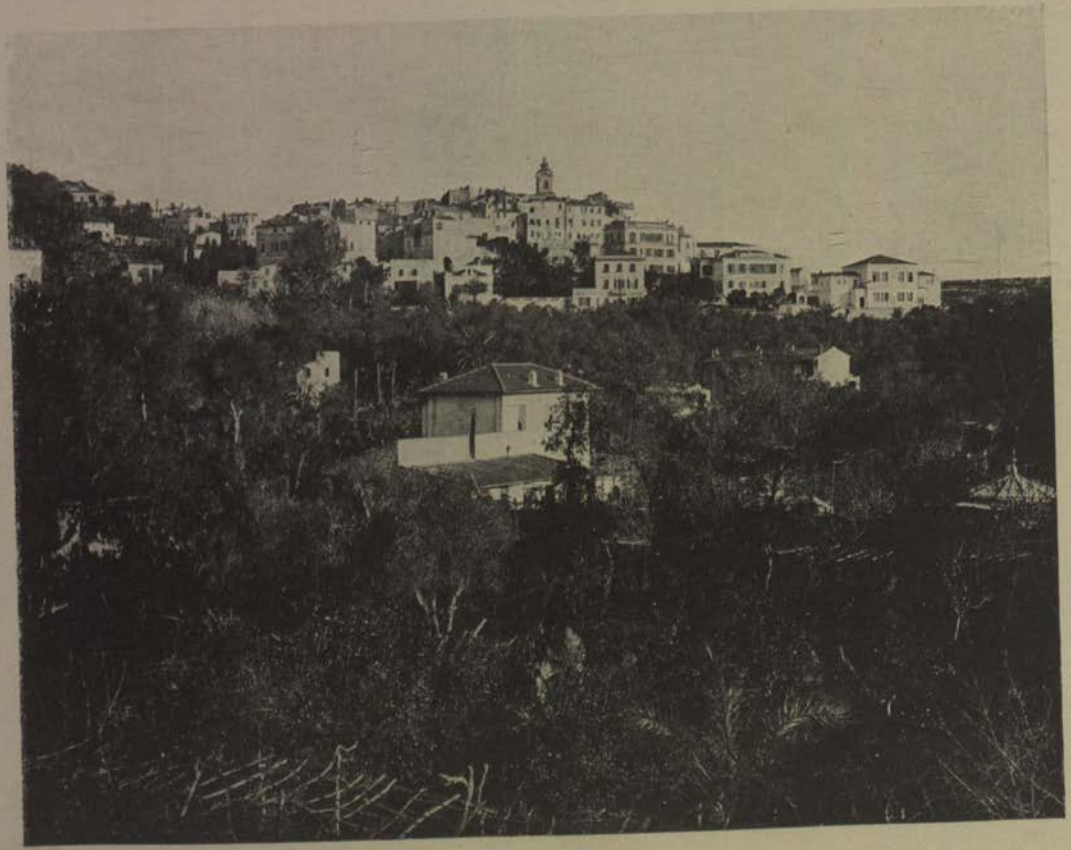
pictures of the cradle-lands of the oldest civilisation, with which this Oriental tree is especially associated. It is a most charming retreat, full of beautiful flowers and semi-tropical shrubs—where the perfumed afternoon can be pleasantly whiled away listening to the cooing of the white doves flitting in and out among the fronds overhead, which the breeze outside fails to move from their passive eastern repose, and enjoying the golden sunshine which comes through the embowering vegetation filtered of its heat and glare.

The Oriental character which the palms impart to the landscapes of Bordighera would be more striking still were it not for the practice, which prevails in the district during the summer, of binding up with twigs the great out-spreading tufts of fronds in order to bleach them. Tennyson, who visited Bordighera in the summer-time, after the cutting of the leaves for the Easter ceremonies in Rome, seems to have been disappointed with the aspect of the palm-groves, for he says in his poem on "The Daisy," already referred to:—

> "Nor knew we well what pleased us most;
> Not the clipt palm of which they boast."

This wretched maltreatment destroys the grace of the tree, but is the source of a considerable revenue; for one of the principal trades of Bordighera is to supply Rome with palm-leaves for the Easter ceremonies, and the Jews in Germany and Holland for the Feast of Tabernacles. This is said to be the result of a monopoly granted to the inhabitants as far back as the year 1584 by Pope Sixtus V., on account of the important service which Captain Bresca, a native of the district, rendered in connection with the elevation of the great obelisk in the square of St. Peter's Church in Rome. Contrary to the orders of the Pope, this sailor, during a crisis in the operation, broke the silence by calling aloud to "wet the ropes," whereupon the obelisk was successfully raised to its present position. The privilege of supplying palms to the Vatican for Palm Sunday and Holy Trinity services still belongs exclusively to the descendants of Captain Bresca; but the inhabitants of Bordighera generally engage in the business of furnishing palm-leaves for the rest of Europe.

Previous to the romantic incident above narrated the specimens of palm-trees existing in the district were few and far between, the survivors of those which had been planted in all likelihood by the Saracens. But since the time of Sextus V. a great impetus has been given to the cultivation of the tree; and now plantations or nurseries abound everywhere, which furnish the enormous quantities of leaves sent away each year from these shores. In these plantations only a few of the trees could have seen the preceding century. It will thus be understood that it is not for the sake of its fruit or its Oriental appearance that the palm abounds at Bordighera, but for the sake of its leaves. When these leaves are wanted by the Roman Catholics, they are prepared *alla romana*, *i.e.*, they are bleached to a pale delicate



Photo, Giletta, Nice *Bordighera.*

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colour as a symbol of purity, in the same way that gardeners blanch the white hearts of lettuces, and in this state they are valued twice as much as the ordinary green ones. They are plaited into all kinds of curious and elegant shapes, and make beautiful ornaments. When, on the other hand, they are required for the Jewish ceremonies, they are treated somewhat differently, *alla ebrea* · the fronds are much shorter, and are provided with a smaller number of blunter leaflets. The palm-nurseries are also kept up for the purpose of supplying young plants for exportation to other places along the Riviera, where the palm is now extensively cultivated as an ornament. These young plants are obtained by separating the suckers from the roots and from the axils of the leaves; and if planted in a suitable situation will bear fruit when five or six years old, whereas specimens grown from seed produce no dates till they have reached fifteen or twenty years of age. There is a beautiful contrast between the green leaves and the burning chrome yellow of the fruit hanging in profuse clusters out of the shady recesses. Loosely covering the ring marks left by the old leaves, the sheaths in which they had been wrapped like bud-scales before they unfolded, may be seen deprived of their pulp by decay, like ragged pieces of coarse cloth. This fibrous network looks as if it had been woven by human art: and, perhaps, as weaving was invented in Egypt, men may have learned, as Dean Alford suggests, the art of crossing threads for the texture of a fabric, from this peculiar feature of the palm. It is a common idea that the presence of old palm-trees in great numbers is of itself a sure sign of the exceptional mildness of the climate. But the palms of Bordighera are no indication that this place is more favoured than Mentone or Monaco, or many other sheltered places along the coast where the palm is not a common feature in the landscape. The tree would, indeed, grow equally well in these places; and it is absent at present simply because its cultivation would not pay, in the face of the monopoly of the supply of palm-leaves which Bordighera has so long enjoyed.

Bordighera derives its name from the word *bordigue*, which means a creek or gulf. This creek has now disappeared, having been filled up with the material brought down from the hills by the Nervia when in flood, and by the sand and shingle deposited at their mouths by other streams to the westward, which had been carried onward and accumulated in this place by the constant action of a current sweeping along the shore of the Mediterranean from west to east. This formation is entirely of recent origin. There is every reason to believe, when the town of Bordighera was founded, about the middle of the fifteenth century, that the projecting promontory on which it is situated was a much more prominent object than it is now, and the sea extended very much farther up to the very foot of the hill, forming a little creek, or *bordigue*, which the fishermen used as a safe harbour. That the sea beat against the foot of the hill during the Roman domination is evident from the fact that the old Strada Romana, or Aurelian Way, was carried along the slope of

the hill, where traces of it have recently been found; whereas it would have run along the present plain near the seashore, had that plain been in existence at the time. The sea has been slowly and steadily retiring, owing to the aforesaid causes, for many centuries; and in this way an increase of land for cultivation has been acquired, which has been subjected to special taxation by the communal council. Owing to the possession of a *bordigue*, or creek, which sheltered their boats, the inhabitants of Bordighera became expert fishermen and sailors, carrying the various productions of the coast from one place to another by sea. And although the old harbour has been silted up, the people seem to retain the capacity which they inherited from their ancestors; for they are still the best fishermen on the coast, and supply Mentone and San Remo with excellent fish. In connection with the two industries of the district, it may be interesting to notice that here and elsewhere along the coast a large number of the words which the fisherman uses are obviously of Greek origin, pointing back to the Phocæan colonisation of the ports of Provence; while, on the other hand, a considerable portion of the technical phraseology of the gardener has been derived from the Arabic language, and is a relic of the Saracenic invasion. The old Greeks of this coast were good fishermen and the Moors good gardeners; and, therefore, their descendants still use their vocabulary. The fisherman calls his bread *artoun*, from the Greek *artos*, and his net *bregin*, from *gripus*, and his little boat *squifon*, from *scapha*, and the thunder *trom*, from *bronte*. And the gardener calls his sweet grape *anjubis*, from the Arabic *algibiz*, and his endive *endibo*, from *endib*, and his salad *salata*, from *salatha*.

The view from the extremity of Cape St. Ampelio is exceedingly extensive and beautiful, embracing the great palm-groves and the smooth beach, with its numerous fishing-boats, to the east, and the splendid panorama of mountains to the west. The spot received its name from Ampelius, the patron saint of the locality, who came originally from Egypt at the commencement of the fifth century, and lived a hermit's life for many years in a cavern in this place. By some authorities he has been identified with Apelles, a monk and priest in Upper Egypt, who followed the trade of smith, and became famous for his miracles; a legend like that of St. Dunstan being told of his chasing the devil on one occasion with a red-hot iron. During his residence on the promontory of Bordighera, he was known far and wide for the austerity of his life, his kindness to the sick and suffering, and the remarkable miracles which he performed. And when he died he was buried in the cave in which he lived, and his grave became a shrine of pilgrimage. An ancient little chapel dedicated to St. Ampelius stands over the spot at the present day, the crypt of which is the anchorite's cave, known to the people as the "grotto." Above the altar in this chapel is a statue in white marble of the saint, holding his blacksmith's hammer, executed upwards of two hundred years ago. On the 14th of May, which is the saint's day, the chapel is still visited by crowds of devotees.

Next to St. Ampelius, Bordighera owes most to Ruffini, the well-known author of "Dr. Antonio," who before his political exile in England lived in Taggia, near San Remo. Having laid the scene of this most charming story in Bordighera and its neighbourhood, he was the first to direct the attention of the travelling public to this isolated and previously unknown spot, and to do for it what Brougham did for Cannes, and Smollett for Nice, and Bennett for Mentone. Indeed, Bordighera is identified with "Dr. Antonio," which gives to the place the same sort of charm that the "Lady of the Lake" gives to the Trossachs. The house where the incident occurred which gave rise to the romance is still pointed out; and the palm-garden filled with the most lovely trees and flowers, and commanding most beautiful views, which is said to have belonged to Dr. Antonio, is a little to the east of the town, and has passed into the possession of Sir Thomas Hanbury, of La Mortola.

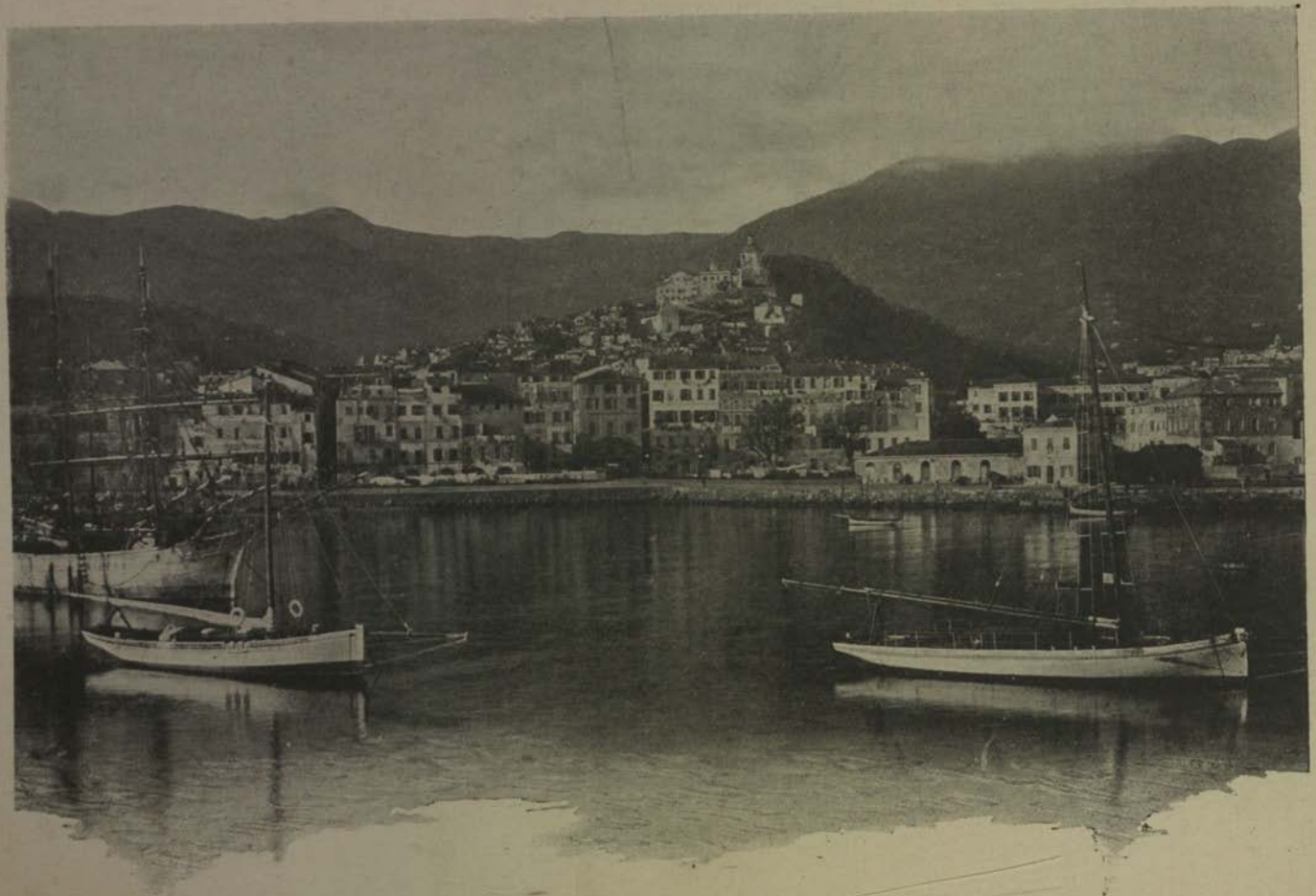
The old town of Bordighera, like most of the other old towns of this coast, is perched on the slope of a hill in a very picturesque fashion dear to the artist's eye. It was at one time surrounded by a high castellated wall, the remains of which are now shaggy with valerian, snapdragon, and other wild flowers. Its steep narrow streets are crossed here and there overhead with stone arches, binding the houses together and securing them against the shocks of earthquakes, which have been somewhat frequent in the district. The vistas in these curious streets looking up to the lofty mountains towering above the town, or down to the deep blue sea below, are extremely romantic, especially when some religious procession, with its brilliant vestments and banners and flaming candles, is passing by, as is often the case. The Via Dritta, leading to Signor Moreno's garden, is a characteristic specimen and a favourite study with artists, being equally effective whether looking up the steep declivity with the old gate of the town as a background, or looking back through the arch of this gateway upon the view which it frames. The picturesque campanile originally an avisium, or watch-tower, of the fine old church, with its coloured tiles, red, green and yellow, like a serpent's scales, is seen in the background rising up from a curious colonnade, forming a most harmonious picture. The interior of this church has beautiful altars, precious paintings, and exquisite carving, associated with much that is tawdry and unsightly. In the centre of the little piazza, facing the Church steps, is a pretty fountain with a statue above it executed by Sivori, the Genoese sculptor; and near at hand is the aqueduct which supplies it, where all the washer-women of Bordighera may be seen almost the whole day busy at their work. The new town, which extends below the old in a straggling manner westward, along the Genoese road, is situated almost on a level with the sea, and for this reason seems unsuitably chosen for invalids, for effective draining is almost impossible.

There are few places in the Riviera that offer to the invalid a greater variety of charming excursions to interesting places than Bordighera. The Via Bischoffsheim, leading from the Hotel d'Angleterre at the station to the mountains, is an easy walk,

affording a series of the most exquisite views. A most popular excursion is by the Roman road to the Tower of Mostaccini, anciently called Mons Stationis, which occupies a most conspicuous position on a high plateau covered with firs, and commands a very wide and magnificent horizon. It is in excellent preservation, though it is supposed to date far back into Roman times, and to have served during the stormy Middle Ages as an avisium or watch tower. A mile and a-half to the east of the town, on the high-road, is the little hamlet of Ruota, so called from the Knights of Rhodes, who once lived there, soon after the foundation of Bordighera, for the purpose of protecting the coast from Algerian corsairs. They founded the little church of the Madonna, which contains a group in Carrara marble representing the Annunciation, well worthy of notice. This lovely spot, with its palm-trees and eastern features and associations, is like a bit of Palestine. Two cold sulphurous wells gush forth here, one beside the church and the other below, almost on the beach, the waters of which are often prescribed by the local physicians. In the wood of Montenero, overhanging the bay, there are several fissures in the rocks, which are called *ciotti fumosi*, or "smoking holes," which emitted smoke as late as a hundred years ago. Volcanic scoriæ have been dug out of the ground in the neighbourhood, but no traces of lava have been discovered. All these signs point to the existence of a former crater which cannot now be seen, and which must have been extinct long before the existence of man, though never of any formidable character.

About a mile north from Ospedaletti, where were the leprosy hospitals of the Knights Hospitallers, and about four miles from Bordighera, is the most interesting old village of Colla di Rodi, also founded in 1130 by the Knights of Rhodes, perched at a height of a thousand feet on the top of Cape Nero. Its castle of Poypino is mentioned in the third Canto of Dante's Purgatorio. The visitor will find here what he would little expect to see in such a remote and obscure place—a library of six thousand volumes, and a collection of one hundred and twenty original paintings, most of them by the old masters, Fra Bartolomeo, Bassano, A. Caracci, Nicholas and Gaspard Poussin, Paul Veronese, Salvator Rosa, Domenichino, Guido Reni, Andrea del Sarto, Carlo Dolce, etc. This most valuable collection was made by the Abbé S. P. Rambaldi during his long residence in Florence, and bequeathed at his death in 1865, to this his native place. In the sacristy of the church there is a large and beautifully carved ivory crucifix, the legacy of Monsignor Stefano Rossi, also a native of Colla. The church of St. Sebastian has a splendid organ, and pictures of St. Sebastian by Corregio.

To the westward of Bordighera is the beautiful Borghetto Valley, through which as far as Vallebuona, is a good carriage road. This village is extremely picturesque, and posseses a curious sulphur spring, which sometimes ceases to flow for more than a year and then begins anew. At the head of the same valley is the old village of Seborga, the Roman Sepulcrum, which belonged at one time to the Abbey of Lérins,



Photo, Giletta, Nice.

San Remo from the Mole.

To face p. 138.

whose monks had a mint here, where they coined gold and silver pieces, some of which are still extant in the Museum of Vienna, bearing the dates of 1666 and 1686, with a representation of the monastery of St. Honorat surmounted by a mitre, and the inscription, "Deus est ornomentum ecclesiæ."

Up the broad valley of the Nervia is the village of Campo Rosso, which has an interesting and most eventful history. It possesses two curious old churches, both of the twelfth century. St. Pierre, the name of the one, has frescoes of the fifteenth century over the principal door and on the walls of the sacristy, and also some pictures attributed to Brea, of Nice. Its open "place" is lined with arcaded footways. Farther on is Dolce Acqua, built on both sides of the Nervia, which is here crossed by a broad one-arched bridge. It is remarkable for its excellent wines and for its imposing feudal castle of the Dorias, rising high beyond the houses crowded together and piled above each other. One tower which remains of the old fortifications near the river has been converted into a church spire. The castle has been abandoned since the wars of last century, and is now an empty ruin, but it must at one time have been a magnificent structure, worthy of the fame of the great Doria family, defended by strong bastions mounted with cannon and containing large and sumptuous apartments. The old tower stands between Campo Rosso and Dolce Acqua; and above it, perched on a precipitous rock, is the picturesque sanctuary of Santa Croce, at the entrance of the valley of Vallecrosia, so well known to excursionists from Bordighera. On one of the heights on the eastern side of the Nervia, above Dolce Acqua, is the old village of Perinaldo, the birthplace in 1625 of the celebrated astronomer, Giovanni Domenichino Cassini. Educated by the Jesuits at Genoa, he became the first professor of astronomy at the University of Bologna. By means of the shadows cast by the satellites of Jupiter on the disk of that planet, he determined the period of its revolution. He also discovered four new satellites of Saturn, and showed the causes of the moon's libration, as well as gave a more precise determination of the sun's parallax. No less than four generations of Cassinis in the direct line made the name famous in the history of astronomy and geography.

Six miles east from Bordighera is San Remo, which, on account of its superior climate, has increased of late more rapidly than any other town in the Riviera; and in the number of its population and the general elegance of its principal buildings far surpasses Mentone. It was here that Frederick III. of Germany, struck with a fatal illness, spent the last few months of his life. It has not, however, the scenic attractions of Mentone. The hills on which it is situated are monotonously grey with the universal olives, and green with cultivated fields; while the mountains behind, though as high—Mount Bignone being 4,000 feet above the sea—have a much softer character than the barren hoary peaks of the Mentonian amphitheatre. Their outlines and slopes, too, are much tamer, having no deep gaps or gorges between them, the few streams that exist, trickling down their face, only slightly

furrowing them, and veiled in forests of fir-trees. The town itself, however, situated mainly on the western slope of its hills, is far more picturesque to the artistic eye than Mentone. It was built for protection from Algerine pirates, and therefore it consists of long, narrow, tortuous streets, so steep as often to require steps, leading in many places under arched vaults; the irregular houses on either side supporting each other by arched flying buttresses. Charles Dickens remarked that the whole town might be traversed by passing from cellar to cellar. It is a fortress built for defence against the war of man and nature; for while the arches speak of earthquakes, the pipes for molten lead over the gateways and the eye-loops for arrows, and the brackets for the feet of archers, that may still be seen, speak of the terrible contests of the Middle Ages. Notwithstanding the narrowness of the streets and the darkness of their dwelling-houses, however, the inhabitants carefully cultivate bright flowers in their balconies, and train up vines wherever they can against the sides of their houses. The mass of greenery relieves the gloom, and under the shadow of it in the highest stories, exposed to the full sunshine, the people sit and enjoy the extensive and animated view of hill and sea through the vistas of the town. The little shrines, dedicated to the Madonna or to St. Roch, with their votive offerings, in the shape of pots filled with simple flowers, placed before them by some pious hands, upon which one comes here and there at the corners, lend a touching sentiment as well as impart a picturesque feature to the streets.

The spot of central interest is the market place, with its fountain of excellent water, its stalls of fish and fowl, fruits and vegetables, shaded by tasselled planes and rich foliaged chestnut-trees, under which idlers are continually lounging, and boys and grown up men playing at various games. At the north-west corner comes into view the back of the cathedral of San Siro, with its ancient turret and cupola of green and yellow tiles crowning the whole. But the irregular outlines of this interesting building, founded in the twelfth century, are seen to better advantage from the parapet above the torrent relieved against a mass of olive and lemon trees, with glimpses of the sea beyond. Above the houses, on the summit of the hill, is the sanctuary of the Madonna della Costa, with its two cupolas curiously inlaid with water-worn pebbles and its valuable pictures and marbles on either side of the high-altar. It is approached by a broad flight of steps and a road paved with small stones. Half-way up the ascent there are two marble statues of angels, one bearing the sun and the other the moon. They are said to be the survivors of no less than sixty similar statues which once adorned this ascent, but were converted into lime for the outside of the church. The view from this elevated position amply repays the fatigue of the ascent, and gives one a better idea of the general aspect of the old town than can be gained from any other spot. The new town, which stretches along the Genoa road, contains nothing worthy of special notice, with the exception of the Palazzo Borea, at the corner of the Via Cavour, a grand old pile built in the fifteenth

Photo, Giletta, Nice. *Via Capitolo, San Remo.*

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century, and therefore in marked contrast to the modern buildings around it. It has curious figures carved about its doors and windows. It is now let out in offices, shops and dwelling houses, the Marquis Borea occupying the upper part. There is a public garden to the west of the town, and a beautiful strip of ground laid out in walks and shrubberies, gifted by the Empress of Russia, who resided here some years ago, where a band plays on certain days of the week; and nothing can be lovelier than the masses of rosy, golden, and purple-flowered mesembryanthemums, glowing in the brilliant sunshine, which stream over the garden walls and over the wayside banks almost everywhere, mingling and contrasting in some places with a very common but very handsome thistle, *Galactites tomentosa*, distinguished by its green and white scolloped leaves and pale mauve blossoms.

San Remo is a very old town, supposed to occupy the site of a city founded by Greek colonists, and called by them Leucothea. When the Romans obtained possession of it they changed its name to Matuta, after the Goddess of the dawn. In the tenth century it was taken from the Saracens, who had held possession of it for nearly a hundred years, by Count William of Provence, and, rebuilt, was called San Romolo, after the eminent anchorite, who was the first to preach Christianity to the heathen inhabitants, and afterwards became the patron saint of the town. A ruined convent among the pine-trees crowning the summit of the hill still bears this old name, and perpetuates the early dedication of the town below. It was not till the fifteenth century that the town received its present name of San Remo. The origin of this name has been much disputed. One supposition is that it was so called after Remus the brother of Romulus, the mythic founder of Rome, to show the relationship between the old town of St. Romulus and the new town that had sprung up near it. The conjecture, however, is too far-fetched to show any basis in reality. The more probable suggestion is that Remo is only the corruption of Eremo, or Hermitage, the cell where St. Romulus, the patron saint of the town, lived and died, the site of which is now marked by a small chapel below the convent of San Romolo, at which an annual festival is held. The history of San Remo, like that of most of the coast towns of the Riviera, has been full of vicissitudes. It passed successively under different rulers and dynasties, being connected alternately with Ventimiglia, and Genoa; being a fief in turn of the powerful family of the Dorias and of the Dukes of Savoy; French, Spaniards and English having, at one period or another, attacked and taken possession of it. Sometimes it enjoyed a brief independence, and about a hundred years ago formed the capital of a Ligurian Republic, under the romantic name of the District of the Palms. Later it became a prefecture under Napoleon I., and finally passed under the government of Sardinia, being now incorporated with it in the kingdom of United Italy. The olive is the characteristic tree of San Remo; but as late as the sixteenth century it was renowned for its palms, which have now gone to Bordighera, and the connection of the town with the

Crusades has left its memorial behind on the civic escutcheon, which still bears the Crusader's palm.

San Remo has very charming walks in its vicinity through sheltered valleys, clothed densely with lemon and orange trees, and yet pleasantly exposed to the full sunshine. One of the best excursions is to the Chapel of the Madonna della Guardia, situated at a distance of two miles to the eastern side of the town, on the summit of Cape Verde. The Chapel is surrounded by several tall cypress-trees, and is itself a very picturesque object; but it is the glorious and extensive view which it commands that is the attraction. To the west San Remo is seen spread out with the utmost distinctness, surrounded by various shades of green and yellow foliage as olive or lemon groves predominate; and beyond the blue promontory of Bordighera, and farther in the distance Cape St. Martin, on the other side of Mentone, and the purple mountains above Monaco. To the east the coast is studded with white villages, Arma, Riva, San Stefano, and, far away, San Lorenzo, with the blue dazzling plain of the sea in front, and the white-crested waves breaking gently on the shore, leading the imagination onward to the Italian lands which lie in all their magic of beauty and mystery beyond. Behind, on either side of the dark defile of the Ceriana valley are Bussana and Poggio, poor villages in themselves, surrounding their parish churches, but perched in the most romantic fashion on isolated heights, glorified with aërial hues and standing out with marvellous sharpness against the violet sky, so that they seem in the magic of distance abodes of the blessed. While farther west, away to the north, beyond the dark green mountains of San Remo, tower up the serene snowy peaks of the higher Alps, lifting the soul to a kindred sublimity and subduing it to a sympathetic patience and peace. In the valley of Ceriana, that lies below immediately to the east, there are some exquisite nooks, where one could dream idyllic visions, lulled by the music of the stream that flashes through the chestnut-trees and the myrtle-bushes. Nowhere in the Riviera are the wild flowers more numerous and varied. Snow-white stars of Bethlehem, and cherry-coloured blossoms of Adonis, in countless profusion, expand in every sunny glade. The oriental hyacinth, which in England grows in gardens and in glasses indoors, perfumes the air with its white and violet flowers; the elegant lady tulip and the Italian narcissus adorn the wayside banks, and the Neapolitan garlic, with its large umbel of pure white blossoms, covers the open ground as with a drift of snow, warmed by great masses of the common crimson gladiolus; while higher up on the breezy heights the Mediterranean heath covers the sandy soil with its tall dense bushes, and fills the air with a sweet and delicate odour suggestive of the far-off moorlands of home, and on the summit of Monte Bignone may be gathered abundantly the pretty cyclamen-like flowers of *Erythronium Dens Canis*, with its rosy upturned petals, and also the beautiful blue hepatica, occasionally displaying a pink variety. Near the head of the valley to which it gives its name is the very pictur-

esque old town of Ceriana, which is so situated among the mountains that the sun only shines upon it during the middle of the day. Several of its streets are galleries cut in the face of the rock, and it has a very old church and baptistery.

A good carriage road conducts to Taggia, a curious old town about six miles from San Remo, and interesting as the birthplace of Ruffini, where he died about twenty-five years ago. It is situated in a large and wide valley, with a great extent of level land, through which the dangerous torrent of the Argentina flows. This river, whose waters are bright blue and very rapid, has brought down from time to time, during floods, such vast masses of stone and gravel that its bed has been gradually elevated, and the sea that once flowed up to the town has been driven back. This change has happened within comparatively recent times; for we find that Francis I., after the battle of Pavia, in 1525, embarked from Taggia for Spain. An ancient bridge, strongly buttressed, with very unequal arches that take a bend across the stream, and shrines at either end, spans the river, but has often had parts of it carried away by the fury of the floods. It was while sitting on this bridge one day, in a musing mood, that Ruffini first formed the idea of writing his famous story. The old town, with its brown walls, arcaded streets, flying buttresses, and hoary churches, one of which rejoices in a picture by Michael Angelo, is well worth exploring. It concentrates in itself all the characteristic features of the towns of the Riviera, so captivating to the artist. In the Via Soleri, the principal street of the town, on either side of which runs an arched and pillared corridor, is the house where Ruffini's parents lived, and where he spent his earlier years. Here all the shops are decorated with branches of trees over the doorways, not merely the wine shops, as in other places, and the olive and bay are used as well as the fir. Beyond Taggia, approached by a steep and toilsome path up the mountain side, is the famous sanctuary of the Madonna di Lampedusa, the tradition of which is so charmingly described in "Dr. Antonio." The way is marked at regular intervals by stations, and the pictures in the little shrines are far superior to those one usually sees in such situations.

The portion of the Riviera extending eastwards beyond San Remo is comparatively unknown to visitors. It is usually considered as simply a necessary part of the journey to Genoa, and the traveller is satisfied with the glimpses of its scenery which he obtains from the windows of the train as it passes by. Susceptible minds, however, are much impressed by the loveliness of this region; and the fact of its being less frequented gives it a bloom of freshness and novelty which is a very appreciable element in the effect which its landscapes produce. So many objects of beauty and interest attract the attention on every side that the eye roams hither and thither, uncertain, where all is so fascinating, whether to rest on the violet sky, the frequent quaint and brown villages that crown the picturesque heights, glowing in all the warmth of southern light, the villas and solitary farmhouses gleaming among the olive and lemon groves, the background of barren

mountains clothed with softest lights and shadows, or the blue Mediterranean, flashing like a flawless sapphire in the distance, or rolling its waters fringed with a white surf up the graceful curves of some quiet bay. Here and there along the dry beds of the streams, openings may be seen among the rocky hills, and enchanting vistas up the receding valleys, with hamlet after hamlet embosomed among olive or pine woods, crowned by slender, many-storied campanili, hoary with the stains of age, perched on successive heights, ending in a glorious vision of the pure white mountains. Numerous situations present themselves on which an ideal residence might be built; and there are many places well adapted for winter stations for invalids. Some of the towns have already acquired a certain reputation, and are beginning to be frequented by those who prefer a quiet and rural retreat to the gay noisy resorts farther west.

Various attempts have been made to bring Alassio into prominence as a winter station for invalids, but owing to the insufficiency of its shelter from strong cold winds that blow from the north and east, these have not as yet been attended with much success. The character of the vegetation seems here to have undergone a change, as there are few palm-trees, and the lemon does not flourish unless carefully protected; and it is said that the olive-trees in this region produce oil that is much inferior in quality to that of Oneglia. The orange, however, seems to be admirably adapted to the soil and climate, and is, therefore, cultivated with great profit. In itself the town, which contains about 6,000 inhabitants, possesses few attractions. It is dull and decayed-looking. Its streets are narrow, very shady, and ill-paved. There is no esplanade or road facing the sea; and the fact of its being surrounded by a high wall (which is now, however, being pulled down, the town having considerably outgrown its former dimensions), gives the older parts of the town a confined appearance more suggestive of mediæval picturesqueness than of modern convenience. At both ends, however, there is a new suburb, where the houses are, if less quaint, at least more comfortable. To relieve the general monotony there are several large buildings, among them an old conical fort close to the water, two churches, one with a tall spire and dome, and the other with only a spire, giving to the town at a little distance an imposing appearance. The Hotel de Londres, formerly the palace of the Marchese Durante, which used to be very much frequented in the old coaching days, is in the eastern suburbs; and a new hotel on a much larger scale has been built about the middle of the town, fronting the sea. One of the first villas was inhabited by the family of the late Mr. Gibb, a Scottish gentleman, who was so charmed with the locality that he resided here permanently. It is built on an elevation overlooking the town, and is well sheltered by the mountains behind. Its sloping terraces are covered with beautiful orange-trees which yield fruit that is well known for its superior quality. Another handsome villa was inhabitated by General MacMurdo, and Sir Thomas Hanbury, of La Mortola, last January, inaugurated "The Hanbury

Photo, Viglietti, Alassio.

Alassio

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Hall"—which he had built to hold the English Library, and to serve as a room for concerts, lectures, and art exhibitions. Its pyramidal form makes it a conspicuous object in the town. Near the parish church there is a large college, which gives a good scientific and general education. It has twenty-three professors, with three hundred or more students, and ample accommodation of dining and lecture rooms and dormitories. A fine tower rises above the building, containing scientific instruments for meteorological and other observations provided by the government, and a yearly report of such observations is furnished.

Alassio, supposed to have received its name from Alassia, a daughter of the Emperor Otho, who fled here with her lover, is built on a narrow plain close to the sea, in the northern part of the bay called Porto Salvo, which from the projecting capes or enclosing arms of Capes Mele and Santa Croce on either side may be about three miles across. It is encircled by a succession of beautiful ridges and slopes, covered for the most part with olive, carouba, and other trees, giving them a richly wooded appearance. Under the shade of these trees grow an unusual profusion of wild flowers, the blue borage and the white allium sometimes covering the whole ground, and intermingling their blossoms with charming effect. The carouba-tree, strange to say, though it has a special predilection for a warm and sheltered locality, grows here in greater abundance and attains a larger size than in any other place, except Villefranche; while the olive, which flourishes where the carouba cannot grow, is here considerably diminished in quantity and size. The semi-cordon of ridges rises into a series of peaks, which present a very picturesque appearance; but they do not attain the height and grandeur of those which rise behind Mentone, and they are diversified by deep valleys and bosky dells, and the streams are few and insignificant. The highest peak culminates about two miles north-west of the town, in a conical summit about 2,000 feet high, called Monte Pisciavino, crowned with a dark irregular building. Rising so close behind the town, these mountains, which belong to the chain of the Ligurian Alps, sending down here its spurs and buttresses to the sea, reflect the heat of the sun, and make the town too hot in summer; but in winter and spring they are sufficiently high to protect it from the winds which are chilled by their passing over the Alpine snows. The beach, however, has no drawbacks; the inhabitants have free access to it, owing to the railway running behind the town; and its smooth clean sands, which are of a pale yellow or white colour, afford excellent facilities for promenading or bathing. Below the town many fishing-boats are drawn up on the shore, for the inhabitants are principally fishermen and sailors. They catch anchovies and sardines here in such abundance that the preservation and exportation of them is one of the chief industries of the place. Alassio is now lighted by electricity in a very satisfactory manner. It may be mentioned that the concession for all the electric works has been given to Sir Thomas Hanbury's son and nephew, and Sir Thomas himself, who owns considerable property in the region,

has done a great deal to increase the attractions of the spot. Alassio requires only to be known to be greatly appreciated by our countrymen.

There are some interesting walks in the neighbourhood, particularly to the Madonna della Guardia, on the top of the highest hill immediately behind Alassio, with a good view of the snowy mountains on the northern horizon, and an interesting wood of oaks below in which cowslips may be gathered. The curious old town of Moglio clings to the slope of the hill not far off; and the precipitous rocks are wonderfully twisted. The best excursion, however, is to the eastward to the heights of Santa Croce, crowned by the ruins of an old chapel and a curious arch. A well-paved Roman road leads up to it, fringed with luxuriant woods, composed chiefly of large oleanders and carouba-trees. On a clear day a very extensive view is obtained of the town and bay of Alassio and its amphitheatre of mountains, and eastwards of the rocky coast stretching as far as Genoa and beyond it. Farther on the road is cut at a giddy altitude above the sea out of the face of the bare perpendicular rocks; and were it not for the protection of a parapet few would have courage to traverse it or look down into the vast depths beneath.

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